MOROCCO

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Lighthouse, Cape Spartel.

MOROCCO

ITS PEOPLE AND PLACES

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRTEENTH ITALIAN EDITION BY

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TANGIER.

TANGIER.

Of all straits in the world, that of Gibraltar divides, perhaps more completely than any other, two strikingly dissimilar countries, and this unlikeness is the more noticeable on the outward trip from Gibraltar. Here still ferments the noisy, feverish, brilliant life of a European city, and the traveller, from whatever quarter of Europe he may hail, yet feels himself at home in numberless familiar customs and aspects of life.

Three hours later, and the very name of our Continent sounds strange; Christian signifies enemy, and our civilization is unknown, or feared, or scoffed at. Everything, from the very foundations of society to the most trifling details of private life, is metamorphosed, and all indication of the close proximity of Europe has completely disappeared. We suddenly find ourselves in an unknown land, without ties of any kind, and with everything to learn. To be sure the European coast is still visible from the shore, but in our hearts there is a consciousness of immeasurable distance, as though that narrow strip of water were an ocean, those blue, distant hills a delusion.

In the brief space of three hours a transformation has taken place in our surroundings than which nothing more astounding can be witnessed on the face of the earth.

The emotion that one might naturally expect to feel, however, on setting foot for the first time on that vast, mysterious continent, which from earliest childhood has haunted the imagination, is sadly disturbed by the fashion in which the landing is accomplished. Just as the white houses of Tangier began to be plainly visible from the steamer's deck, a Spanish lady standing behind me cried out, "What can those people want?" Following the direction of her outstretched finger I saw, beyond the boats which were coming to take the passengers off, a crowd of ragged, half-naked Arabs standing waist-high in water, and pointing the vessel out to one another with excited gestures, like so many lunatics, or rather like a troop of brigands exclaiming, "There is our prey!" Feeling slightly uneasy in my mind, not knowing who they were, nor what they wanted, I descended into the boat, with a number of my fellow-passengers. When we were still about twenty feet from shore the entire rabble fell on us, laying violent hands upon us, and screaming in Arabic and Spanish, until we finally understood that, the water being too shallow to take the boats in any further, we were expected to effect a landing upon their backs; news which while it quieted our fears of losing any of our

own belongings, aroused no less lively ones of acquiring some of theirs in the form of vermin. The ladies were taken off in chairs, in a sort of triumphal procession, while I made my entry into Africa astride of an old mulatto, my chin resting on the crown of his head and my toes trailing through the water. On reaching dry land my mulatto handed me over to an Arab porter, who, leading the way through one of the city gates, conducted me rapidly along a narrow, deserted street to a hotel close by, whence I lost no time in setting forth, accompanied by a guide, to visit the more frequented thoroughfares.

The first thing that impressed me—and that more strongly than I can give any idea of—was the outward appearance of the population. Everyone wears a long white linen or woollen cape, furnished with a hood, which in most cases is drawn over the head, so that the entire city has somewhat the look of a vast monastery of Dominican monks. Of this shrouded population the one-half moves about slowly, noiselessly, sedately, almost as though trying to escape observation, and the other remains either seated or stretched at full length along the walls, before the shops, or in the angles of the buildings, immovable, with fixed gaze, like the petrified characters in their own legends. Their walk, bearing, very manner of looking, is strange to us; everything reveals a habit of thought, an order of things totally unlike our own; an altogether different way of regarding time and

human life. These people do not seem to be preoccupied with their own affairs, neither do they concern themselves with their immediate surroundings nor with what goes on about them. They all have a vague, absent-minded expression, as though possessed by a fixed idea, or like persons reflecting upon distant scenes, or remote periods of time—dreaming, as it were, with open eyes. No sooner, too, had I mingled with them a little than I became aware of a peculiar odor quite unlike anything I had ever noticed in a European crowd—a smell unknown, far from agreeable, and yet none the less inhaled by me with a keen curiosity, as though I hoped to discover in it the clew to some of the surrounding mystery. As I approached nearer, the population, which at a short distance had seemed to be so entirely uniform, began to present a strange variety of types. White, black, yellow, bronze faces passed close by me; heads from which long locks of hair depended, and others close shaved and polished till they shone like metal balls; men looking like dried-up mummies, and old people in whom age was horrible; women whose heads, and, indeed, entire persons, were enveloped in shapeless masses of rags; long-haired children, faces of sultans, savages, wizards, anchorites, bandits; of a people weighed down by a boundless melancholy or unutterable weariness, and on few or none a smile; following one another with measured tread, silent, spectral, like a

procession of spirits seen flitting down the path of a graveyard. I hardly know why, but as I looked I suddenly felt compelled to turn my gaze upon myself and to say, inwardly, "I am so and so, of such and such a place, this is Africa where I am now, and those people are Arabs," and think about it for a few moments before I could get the idea firmly fixed in my mind; this accomplished, I began a tour of some of the other streets.

The city corresponds to the character of its inhabitants. It is a labyrinth of narrow, tortuous lanes, or rather passage-ways, flanked by small, square, white houses, devoid of windows, and whose solitary doors barely admit the passage of one person at a time—houses seemingly built more for concealment than as habitations, and whose outward appearance suggests a cross between a prison and a convent. In many of the streets nothing can be seen but the white of the buildings and the blue of the sky; from time to time there is a little Moorish arch or two, now and then an arabesqued window, a strip of red along the foot of the wall, or a black hand painted beside a door-way to drive off evil spirits. Almost all the streets are littered with decayed vegetables, feathers, rags, bones, and sometimes the bodies of dead animals poison the air. For long distances no one at all is to be seen, then an occasional group of hooded Arab boys playing or reciting verses from the Koran in shrill, nasal tones, a beggar stretched on the ground,

a Moor astride of a mule, an overloaded donkey with bleeding flanks driven by a half-naked Arab, scarred dogs without tails, and cats thin beyond belief. Now and then in passing one catches a whiff of garlic, of smoke from the *Kiff*, the smell of burning aloe-wood, of benzoin, of fish. And thus wandering on the whole city is traversed, presenting everywhere the same unvarying, dazzling whiteness, the same aspect of mystery, of melancholy and of utter weariness.

After making a brief circuit I returned to the principal, indeed the only, square of Tangier, divided by a long street which, ascending from the water, crosses the entire city. The square is surrounded by wretched little Arab shops, which would look poor and forlorn in one of our smallest villages. On one side stands a fountain always surrounded by a crowd of Arabs and negroes, drawing water in gourds and jugs; on the other may be seen, at any hour of the day, eight or ten women, seated on the ground with muffled heads, engaged in selling bread. About the square stand the exceedingly modest establishments of the foreign legations, which, however, rear themselves like palaces amid their surroundings of little Moorish houses. In this small space is concentrated all the life of Tangier, which at best is but the life of a village. Hard by may be found the solitary tobacconist of the place, the solitary druggist, the solitary café—a large room containing a billiard table—and the solitary corner where one may occasionally expect to see a notice

Street in Tangier.

posted up. There assemble half-naked ragamuffins, rich Moors with nothing to do, Jews come to discuss questions of trade, Arab porters awaiting the arrival of the steamer, legation attachés longing for the dinner hour, strangers just landed, interpreters, beggars. There the courier bringing the Sultan's commands from Fez, or Mequinez, or Morocco, jostles the servant returning from the post with Paris and London newspapers. There mingle belles of the harem and minister's wives, Bedouins' camels and drawing-room lap-dogs, turbans, stiff hats, the loud notes of a piano issuing from the window of a consulate and the wailing sing-song heard through the Mosque's half-open door. It is on this spot that the last billow of European civilization breaks and dissolves before the mighty Dead Sea of African barbarism.

From the square I remounted the principal street, and passing through two ancient gateways found myself outside the city walls just as dusk was beginning to fall. Before me lay a large open space covering the side of a hill. This is called the Sök di Barra,—outer or upper market,—because market is held there every Sunday and Thursday. Of all the spots in and about Tangier visited by me, this was perhaps the one that most vividly impressed upon my mind the character of its people. It is a bare, rough, uneven stretch of ground; half way up the incline rise the four white walls of a saint's tomb, on the summit stands a cemetery, beyond may be seen a few aloe

and Indian fig-trees, and below, the battlemented walls of the city. At this particular moment a group of Arab women were squatted on the ground close by the gate, with bunches of herbs lying before them; a long line of camels crouched by the tomb, further on rose the dark outlines of half a dozen tents, hard by some Arabs sat in a fascinated circle listening to a story-teller, who stood erect in the centre to recount his tale; cows and horses were tethered about; on the hill-top, among the stones and mounds of the cemetery, other Arabs stood, motionless as statues, with faces turned towards the city, figures all in shadow, and peaked hoods sharply defined against the pale gold of the horizon; and over all this scene a sombreness of color, a silence and gloom, that cannot be described, unless indeed the words were murmured one by one in the listener's ear, as though they contained some momentous secret.

The guide aroused me at last from my reverie and escorted me back to the hotel, where my usual dislike to being among entire strangers was for the first time in my life mitigated by the circumstance of their being all Europeans, Christians, and clad like myself. There were about twenty persons seated at table, of both sexes and various nationalities, offering in themselves a pretty fair example of that strange mingling of families and interests which prevails in those parts. A Frenchman born in Algiers married to an Englishwoman of Gibraltar; a Spaniard

from Gibraltar married to the sister of a Portuguese consul from the Atlantic coast; an elderly Englishman accompanied by a daughter born in Tangier and a niece from Algeria; families who wandered back and forth from one continent to the other, or scattered up and down the two coasts, talking five languages, and living half like Arabs, half like Europeans. Hardly had dinner begun when a lively conversation sprang up, now in French, now in Spanish, interspersed with Arabic words and upon topics which were certainly far enough removed from the ordinary subjects discussed by Europeans. Now it was the price of a camel, now the stipend of a Pasha, whether the Sultan were black or white, whether the report that ten heads had been brought to Fez from the rebellious province of Garet were true or no, when the party of religious fanatics who eat live sheep might be expected in Tangier, and many other things of a like nature, all of which aroused in my breast the very demon of curiosity. Then the conversation turned upon European politics, disconnected, as such discussions among people of different nationalities always are, and with a repetition of the usual empty, sounding phrases which people invariably employ when talking of far-off political conditions, inventing off-hand improbable alliances and absurd wars. Next the talk turned upon Gibraltar, that inevitable topic; the great Gibraltar, centre of attraction for all Europeans scattered along those coasts,

where their sons are educated and where they themselves go to buy their clothes, order furniture, hear the opera, and inhale a mouthful of European air. And finally every one fell to discussing the departure of the Italian embassy for Fez, and I had the grati fication of learning that this event was of considerably greater importance even than I had supposed; that it was being talked of in Tangier, Algesiras, Cadiz, and Malaga; that the caravan was to be a mile long; that some Italian painters were to accompany the embassy, and that it was even said that *a representative of the press* might be of the party! At which piece of news I arose from the table and modestly withdrew. Later on, when the night was somewhat advanced, I determined to take another turn through the town in order to see it asleep. Not a lamp was burning, not a window lighted, nor was there a single crack or chink through which a ray of light escaped. It was like an uninhabited city, illumined only by the starry heavens against which the loftier buildings stood out like great white tombstones, and the points of the minarets and tips of the palm-trees were thrown into clear relief. Proceeding to the very foot of the principal street, I found the gates shut, and so, turning, threaded my way through various by-ways; but everything was closed, motionless, silent Two or three times I stumbled over what I at first mistook for bundles of rags, but discovered to be sleeping Arabs. More than once a shudder of

disgust ran through me as I knew, by the crunching of bones and soft, yielding sensation beneath my feet, that I had trodden on the carcass of a dog. A hooded Arab glided close by me, sliding along the wall like a spectre. Another loomed up for a moment at the end of a side street and disappeared; and once, as I made a sharp turn, a hurried rustle of garments and patter of slippers made me suspect, though nothing was to be seen, that I had disturbed a secret meeting. As I walked no sound broke the stillness save that of my own footsteps, and when I paused nothing could be heard but my own breathing. It seemed to me as though the population of Tangier consisted only of myself, and that were I to utter a sudden cry it would resound through the empty streets like a clap of thunder. I thought of all the beautiful Arabians sleeping close by, and of the many strange secrets that would be divulged were the interiors of all those houses suddenly to be exposed to view like the scenes of a theatre. From time to time I would pause before a stretch of dazzling white wall, against which the moon shone with such splendor as to make it look as though it were lit up by electric lights. In a narrow alley I encountered a negro carrying a lantern, who, pausing to let me by, murmured some unintelligible words. Just as I was issuing from a side street into the square a loud burst of laughter suddenly broke the profound stillness; it proceeded from two young men in high hats, probably attachés of

one of the legations, who were passing by, talking as they went. In one corner of the square, beneath the awning of a closed shop, some rays of light glimmered feebly, disclosing a confused mass of whitish rags, from the midst of which issued the faint notes of a guitar and the tremulous, lamenting tones of a human voice, like a sound borne from afar on the fitful breeze. I stood for some time quite motionless, dreaming rather than thinking, until at length, the two Europeans having disappeared and the light been extinguished, I bethought me of the hotel, and turned my steps thither, weary, bewildered, with my brain in a tumult, and a curious, unfamiliar impression of my own personality, such as I have often fancied would be that of a man who finds himself suddenly transported to another planet.

On the following morning I set forth in search of our chargé d'affaires, Comm. Stefano Scovasso. He certainly could not charge me with being unpunctual at the appointed meeting. I had received my invitation on the 8th at Turin, and with it a notification that the caravan would set out from Tangier on the 19th; on the morning of the 18th I presented myself at the legation doors. I had no personal acquaintance with Comm. Scovasso, but had heard enough about him to make me extremely anxious to meet him. Of two friends of his whom I had questioned before leaving home, one had informed me that he was a man perfectly capable of

going on horseback from Tangier to Timbuctoo with no companion other than a pair of pistols, while the other had blamed him severely for yielding to his besetting sin, which, it appeared, was a confirmed habit of risking his own life in order to save that of someone else. Thanks to these indications I was able to recognize him at a glance while still some distance away—before, indeed, the interpreter who accompanied me from the hotel had pointed him out. He was standing in the doorway of the legation, surrounded by an obsequious group of Arabs, who appeared to be awaiting orders. I introduced myself, was received, promptly offered the hospitality of the *quartier generale*, and furnished with full information regarding the expedition. This, it appeared, had been postponed until the first of May owing to the fact of the English embassy being in Fez at the time; from which place we must await the horses, camels, mules, and a troop of cavalry, which was to form an escort for the journey. A transport-ship belonging to our military marine, the *Dora*, had already landed the presents which Victor Emanuel was sending to the Emperor of Morocco. The main object of the trip, so far as the chargé d'affaires was concerned, was to present his credentials to the youthful Sultan Mulai el Hassan, who had ascended the throne in September, 1873. No Italian embassy had ever been sent to Fez, and the flag of United Italy would now be carried for the first time into

the interior of Morocco; the expedition was, consequently, to be received with extraordinary honors. The Minister of War had sent a staff captain, Signor Giulio di Boccard, and the Minister of Marine a captain of a frigate, Signor Fortunato Cassone, then in command of the *Dora*, now of a man-of-war. These, together with the Italian vice-consul at Tangier and our consular agent at Mazagan, formed the official part of the embassy. Two artists—Ussi from Florence and Biseo from Rome—and I were private guests of Signor Scovasso. Everyone, with the exception of the Mazagan consular agent, had already reached Tangier.

My first care, on finding myself alone, was to study the dwelling in which I was to be a guest; and, indeed, the residence of a European minister in Africa, especially if he be making preparations for a trip into the interior, is worthy of close observation. The building itself was in no way remarkable—white and bare without, having a small garden in front and a small court in the centre, furnished with four columns supporting a covered gallery running all around it on a level with the second floor. It was the ordinary gentleman's dwelling of Cadiz or Seville, but the occupants, the mode of life, were something altogether novel. The housekeeper and cook were Piedmontese, one of the servants was a Moor of Tangier, and another a negress from the Soudan who went about with bare feet, the Arab grooms

and domestics wore long white tunics, the consular guard a uniform consisting of a fez, red caftan and dagger. All were in constant motion throughout the day. At certain hours there would be a great coming and going of Hebrew workmen, negro porters, interpreters, soldiers of the Pasha, and Moors under the protection of the legation. The courtyard was filled with packing-cases, camp-beds, rugs and lanterns. There was a continual noise of saws and hammers, and voices of servants calling to one another by such unfamiliar names as Fatma, Racma, Selam, Mohammed, Ali, Abd-er-Rhaman. Then there was such a queer mixture of languages. A Moor comes on some errand, which he explains in Arabic to another Moor, who transmits it in Spanish to the housekeeper, who repeats it in Piedmontese to the cook; it was a ceaseless confusion of translations, explanations, misunderstandings and doubts, intermingled with exclamations of *Por dios! Alla!* and familiar Italian oaths. In the street a continuous procession of horses and mules, before the door a permanent group composed of the merely curious and others, poor devils of Arabs or Hebrews, humble aspirants for the protection of the legation. From time to time visitors arrive, a minister or consul, then down go all the fezzes and turbans in lowly obeisance. Every moment brings some mysterious messenger clad in strange attire, and with curious, foreign-looking features. So picturesque is the ever-shifting variety of form and color,

of pose and gesture, that only the accompanying music is needed to persuade the looker-on that it is all a part of a ballet representing some Eastern scene.

My next care was to borrow some books from my host in order to satisfy myself as to what country this really was before attempting to study its habits and customs. This land, then, shut in by the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, the Desert of Sahara and Algeria, crossed by the great Atlas range, watered by wide rivers and opening out into immense plains, the home of every variety of climate, richly endowed in the domains of all three natural kingdoms, possessing untold riches, and clearly intended by virtue of its geographical position to form the great commercial high-road between Europe and Central Africa, has at present a population of about eight millions, including Berbers, Arabs, Moors, Jews, negroes and Europeans, scattered over an area larger than the whole of France. The Berbers, who form the nucleus of the native population,—wild, turbulent, indomitable,—live among the inaccessible Atlas Mountains, and are almost independent of imperial authority. The Arabs—the conquering nation—occupy the plains; they are still nomadic and pastoral, and have not entirely lost that pride which was once their natural characteristic. The Moors—corrupt Arabs of mixed blood, descended for the most part from the Spanish Moors—dwell in the towns, and have the

Nomads from the Interior.

wealth, commerce and carrying trade of the country pretty much in their own hands. The negroes, numbering about five hundred thousand, come originally from the Soudan; they are for the most part servants, laborers and soldiers. The Jews number about the same as the negroes, and are most of them descended from those of their nation who were driven out of Europe during the Middle Ages. Oppressed, hated, persecuted and humiliated more here, perhaps, than in any other country in the world, they exercise their several arts and industries with that ingenuity, docility and perseverance so characteristic of their race, consoling themselves for the injuries they are obliged to endure in the possession of money wrested from their oppressors. The Europeans have been driven back little by little from the interior of the empire towards the coast by Mussulman intolerance, and now amount to less than two thousand persons throughout the whole of Morocco, most of these residing in Tangier, and living independently in the shadow of the legation flags. This heterogeneous population, scattered and diverse, is oppressed rather than ruled by a military government, which, like a huge polypus, absorbs the entire vitality of the country. The tribes and villagers obey their own chiefs, the cities and smaller provinces the Kaïds, the large provinces the Pashas, and the Pashas the Sultan—chief sherif, high priest, supreme judge, administrator of the laws which emanate from himself;

free to altar at his own will or caprice currency, taxes, weights, measures, and absolute master of the lives and property of his subjects. Beneath the weight of such a government and encircled by the inflexible bands of the Mussulman religion, untouched by any influx of European ideas and controlled by a savage fanaticism, all that which in other countries changes and advances here either remains stationary or falls into decay. Commerce is choked by monopolies, by prohibitory measures controlling exports and imports, and by the capricious mutability of the laws; trade,—its activity restricted by the fetters that impede commerce,—with its primitive machinery and childish methods, is to-day in much the same condition as before the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; agriculture is so weighted by excessive taxation at home—while restrained from seeking a foreign market for its produce—that it is now only practised to the extent of providing the barest necessities of life, and has sunk so low as hardly to merit the name; and, finally, science, choked by the Koran and profaned by superstition, now consists in most schools of such elementary propositions as were commonly taught in the Middle Ages. There are no printing-presses, books, or maps; the language, itself a corrupt form of Arabic, is only preserved by means of an imperfect and variable orthography, and grows steadily worse, and the national character, in that general decadence, more degenerate still. All the ancient Mussulman civiliza-

tion is withering away. Morocco, that extreme western bulwark of Islamism, once the seat of a monarchy which ruled from the Hebrus to the Soudan, and from the Niger to the Balearics, with its flourishing universities, its huge libraries, its famous scholars, its armies and formidable fleets, is nothing now but a little state, almost unknown, filled with poverty and decay, resisting with all its remaining strength the inroads of European civilization, and only retaining its place at all by grace of the mutual jealousies of the various Powers.

As for Tangier, the ancient Tingis which gave its name to the Mauritania Tingitana, and passed successively from the hands of the Romans into those of the Vandals, Greeks, Visigoths, Arabs, Portuguese and English, it is now a city of about fifteen thousand inhabitants, regarded by its sister cities of the empire as a "prostitute of the Christians," though as a matter of fact no traces are to be seen of the churches and monasteries founded by the Portuguese, and the Christian religion is represented by one small chapel, hidden away amid the consular residences.

Having possessed myself of this general outline of the present condition of the country, I next began to pursue various investigations on my own account in and about the streets and by-ways of Tangier by way of preparation for the coming journey, making notes from day to day of such things as especially struck me. Here are some of them, incomplete and discon-

nected enough, but written as they were while the impressions were still fresh, probably of more value than a more carefully prepared description would be.

Every time I pass a handsome Moor in gala dress I feel ashamed. Compare my ugly hat with his great muslin turban; my wretched short coat with his flowing caftan of jasmine or rose-color; in short, the general poverty and dulness of my costume, all gray and black, with the brilliancy, the simple elegance and dignity of his. I am like a beetle beside a butterfly. Sometimes I stand for ever so long gazing from my window at the edge of a pair of blood-red trousers surmounting a yellow slipper which can be seen around the corner of a pillar in the square below, extracting such enjoyment from the sight that it is difficult to tear myself away; and more than anything else does the *caïk* arouse my envy and admiration, that long strip of whitest wool or silk, with transparent stripes, which is folded first about the turban, falling from thence down the back to be wound around the body, knotted below the shoulders, and descend, finally, to the ground. Enfolding, as it were, in a misty cloud the brilliant hues of the clothing beneath, it stirs and spreads with every breath of wind, glows like fire in the rays of the sun, and endows the wearer with the diaphanous appearance of a vision. It is this charming scarf which the enamored Mussulman wraps about his bride on the wedding night.

Only those who have seen for themselves would

Fountain, Tangier.

believe the extent to which the Arabs have mastered the art of taking their ease. In corners where we would be embarrassed as to how to dispose of a bag of rags or a bundle of straw, one of them will stretch himself out as comfortably as though reposing upon a bed of down. They curl themselves around every projection, fill up hollows, flatten themselves along the face of a wall like a bas-relief, stretch and spread out flat on the ground until they look like white cloaks laid there to dry, roll themselves up into balls, cubes, monstrosities without arms or legs or heads, so that sometimes the streets and squares of the city suggest the scene of a late massacre, all strewn with dead bodies and mutilated corpses.

The more I see of these people the more I am filled with admiration at the freedom and nobility of their bearing. Whether it is owing to the cut of our clothes or our tight shoes, or whether it is merely the result of habit I cannot say, but it is unusual among us to find any one whose walk is not artificial, whereas here every one moves along with the grace and freedom of magnificent wild animals. I have observed them attentively, and thus far have seen none of the bully, dancing-master, or awkward-lover gaits to which my eye has long been accustomed by the thousand examples to be seen daily in our streets. There is in the carriage of each one of them something of the stateliness of a priest, the dignity of a king and the freedom of a soldier, and it is very re-

markable that people who pass so much of their time stretched out at full length, immovable, in a state of semi-torpor, if their passions be aroused never so little, exhibit a strength and vigor of voice and gesture which nearly borders on frenzy. But even in their most furious outbursts they still preserve a sort of tragic dignity which would afford an excellent example for many an actor. It will be long, for instance, ere I forget the Arab of this morning, a tall, wasted old man, who, having, as I was told, been given the lie by one with whom up to then he had been carrying on a mild dispute, grew suddenly pale, drew back, and then strode down the street, covering his face convulsively with both hands and giving vent to a wild cry of mingled anger and reproach. Seldom have I seen an attitude so striking and so full of grace. The ordinary costume consists of a simple white cloak, but what extraordinary variety they manage to introduce into the fashion of wearing it! One has it open, another closed; this one drawn to one side, that one caught up on the shoulder, or twisted like a rope, or floating free; but always it is arranged with taste in an endless variety of lines, flowing or severe, as though draped by the hand of an artist, or rather as an artist would fain know how to drape it. They all look like Roman Senators. This morning Ussi discovered a wonderful Marcus Brutus in the middle of a group of Bedouins. But unless the wearers are accustomed to

them these cloaks are not sufficient of themselves to lend dignity to the figure. Some of us bought them for the journey and tried them on, but for my part I could think of nothing but a group of old convalescents wrapped in bath sheets.

As yet I have seen no dwarfs, deformed or lame persons among the Arabs, though many of them have no noses, the result of *morbo celtico*, and blindness is very common, the eye-sockets being frequently entirely empty, a sight which always made me shudder, reflecting as I did that in some cases at least the eyeballs had doubtless been torn out in pursuance of the law of retaliation which still flourishes in the empire. But there is nothing grotesque or despicable in the appearance of any of the many strange, unprepossessing looking figures one encounters. The ample garments hide all minor defects, just as the universal seriousness and the wooden, terra-cotta or bronzed look of the skin conceals the differences of years, so that one constantly meets men whose age it is impossible to tell; not old people, surely, and yet they do not seem young; perhaps we think they are old, and then a fleeting smile will all at once reveal their youthfulness; or, having definitely decided that they are young, the hood suddenly falls back and exposes a grizzled head beneath.

The Jewish men of these parts resemble their European compatriots in so far as their features are concerned, but their superior height, darker skin and

long black hair, and, above all, their picturesque dress, make them seem like an altogether different race. They wear a garment shaped somewhat like a dressing-gown, varying in color, but usually dark, and bound about the waist by a red scarf; a black cap, wide trousers appearing only a few inches below the skirts of the coat, and yellow slippers; and it is interesting to note how many "exquisites" there are among them, dressed in the finest materials, with embroidered shirts, silken scarfs, and gold rings and chains—nothing tawdry, though. The general effect, on the contrary, is rather severe, and at the same time both graceful and dignified, with the exception, that is, of a few misguided ones who have become perverts to the high hat and long black coat. Among the boys there are some slight, graceful figures, but the species of dressing-gown worn by all alike is not adapted to their age. Every Jewish youth looks to me like an amateur on the stage of a college dressed for the part of *Protagonist* in the *Campanello dello Speziale.*

I am already satisfied that there is no exaggeration in what has been said of the beauty of the Jewesses of Morocco; it has a character all its own unknown in other countries—opulent and brilliant, the beauty of snowy brows, great black eyes, crimson lips, and statuesque outlines; somewhat theatrical, to be sure, and easily seen from a distance; more calculated, I should fancy, to draw forth a round of applause than

A Moorish Jewess.

amorous sighs. One pictures it surrounded by the torches and wreathed goblets of an ancient feast as in its natural setting. The Tangier Jewesses do not wear their rich national costume in public, dressing much like Europeans except for their fantastic colors, mazarine blue, crimson, grass-green, sulphur-yellow; shawls and petticoats that attract the eye from one hill-top to another, and make their wearers look as though they were arrayed in the flags of all the nations. Passing through the Jewish quarter on a Saturday one sees on all sides vivid colors, florid faces, great, soft, smiling eyes, long black tresses; bevies of noisy, inquisitive children; an exuberance of youth and sensual beauty which offers a striking contrast to the austere silence and solitude of the rest of the city.

The Arab boys make me laugh. The little ones, barely able to toddle, but enveloped as well in the universal white cape, of which the big hood alone is seen, all look like wandering extinguishers. Most of them have their heads shaved as bare as the back of one's hand, except for a single lock hanging down a foot or so in length from the crown, as though the owners were to be suspended like puppets; others wear it behind the ear or over one temple, with a few tufts of hair cut in the form of a square or triangle, to distinguish the last-born of a family. For the most part, they have pale, attractive little faces, slender, erect figures, and an expres-

sion of precocious intelligence. In the more frequented parts of the city they pay no attention to Europeans, and in the side streets usually content themselves with gazing at them fixedly, as though saying under their breath, "I do not like you." Sometimes one will be strongly tempted to call out some piece of impertinence. You can see it shining in his eyes and trembling on his lips, but it is rarely allowed to escape,—not so much by reason of any reverence for the Nazarene as from fear of papa, who respects the atmosphere surrounding the legation. In any case, however, a coin has a pacifying effect, though one must be careful to avoid pulling their pig-tails; as yesterday, when I gave a gentle tug at one belonging to a small creature about a foot high, he turned on me like a little viper, spluttering out some words, which my interpreter told me signified, "May God roast your grandfather, accursed Christian!"

At last I have seen two saints; that is to say, two idiots or lunatics—since here, as elsewhere throughout Northern Africa, it is customary to venerate as saints those whom God, in sign of especial favor, has deprived of their reason in order that He may preserve it in Heaven. The first one I encountered was seated in front of a shop in the principal street. I saw him while yet some distance off, and stood still, knowing well that everything is permissible for a saint, and not especially caring to be struck on the back of the head with a stick, like M. Sourdeau, the French consul, or

be spit at in the face, as once happened to Mr. Drummond Hay. But my interpreter pushed me forward, saying there was no danger, as the Tangier saints had recovered their senses a little since the legations had made a few striking examples; and in any case the Arabs will often act as shields themselves rather than allow a saint to compromise himself. Accordingly, I passed close by this particular scarecrow and examined him attentively. He was an old man, all paunch and face, with long, white hair, and a beard straggling down over his breast; on his head he wore a paper crown, a torn red mantle was thrown across his shoulders, and he carried a little spear tipped with gold. He was seated on the ground, his legs crossed beneath him, his back against the wall, gazing wearily at the people who passed by. I stopped short, and he looked at me. "Now for it," I thought; "here comes the spear!" But the spear was discreet, and I was more than amazed at the calm intelligence of those eyes, and the smile, astute and fleeting, which lit them up for a moment as I looked, as though he were thinking "You expect me to lay across your back, do you? to play the fool?" He was undoubtedly one of those impostors who, perfectly sane, pretend to be crazy in order to enjoy the privileges accorded to saints. I threw him a piece of money, watched the air of affected indifference with which he picked it up, and proceeded in the direction of the square, which I had barely reached

when I came across another, but this time a genuine, saint. He was a mulatto, almost entirely naked, with a face that was hardly human, encrusted from head to foot with dirt, and so wasted that his entire frame could be seen bone for bone, making him look like the "living prodigy" in a show. He was walking slowly around the square, painfully carrying a large white banner, which the boys ran up to kiss from time to time, while another wretched-looking creature, accompanied by two musicians performing frantically upon a fife and drum, begged alms from shop to shop. I passed close beside him, receiving a sidelong glance, which I returned, whereupon he came to a standstill, and seemed to be getting something ready in his mouth, and I moved on as nimbly as possible, taking good care not to look behind. "You did well to get out of his way," said the interpreter. "Had he spat in your face, all the consolation the other Arabs would have offered you would have been to call out, 'Wipe not thy face, O fortunate Christian! Destroy not the mark of God's favor! Blessed art thou, for the saint hath spat upon thee!'"

To-night I again heard the guitar and voice of the first evening, and for the first time *felt* the Arabian music. In that continual repetition of the same motive, almost always a melancholy one, there is something that little by little steals upon the soul. It is a kind of monotonous lament which ends by taking possession of one's mind, just as the murmuring of a

Shops in Tunnel.

fountain does, or the singing of crickets, or the blows of the hammer descending on an anvil, heard at nightfall on the outskirts of some village. I try to collect my thoughts, making an effort to discover the hidden meaning of that ever-recurring word as it falls upon my ears. It is barbarous music, simple, yet ineffably sweet, suggesting a primitive condition recalling long-forgotten dreams, my sensations when the Bible was first read to me, awakening a yearning curiosity about legendary peoples and lands, transporting me to the ends of the earth, where, amid groves of strange, unfamiliar trees, priests prostrate themselves before golden idols; or depositing me on boundless plains in mournful solitudes, where caravans of weary travellers, wistfully eyeing the unbroken horizon, recommend themselves to the mercy of God. Nothing amid my strange surroundings has filled me with such a melancholy longing to see my mother once more as those few notes of a thin human voice and a discordant guitar.

The Moorish shop is a most extraordinary affair, consisting of a sort of alcove about three feet from the ground, at which the customer stands as though it were a window; he leans against the wall and the shopkeeper remains seated within, in the Eastern fashion, a part of his wares spread out before him, and the rest disposed about on little shelves in the rear. The effect produced by those bearded old Moors, immovable as automatons, squatted at the back of their

dark little holes, is odd in the extreme. It is as though not their goods, but they themselves were on exhibition, like living phenomenons in the booths at a fair. Are they alive? Are they made of wood? Where is the mechanism for making them appear and disappear? And thus silent and well-nigh motionless they pass hour after hour—the entire day—running their fingers over the beads of a rosary and murmuring prayers. It is impossible to express how lonely, bored and melancholy they look, sitting there. One would suppose that every shop was a tomb, in which the owner, already separated from the rest of the living, now only awaited the coming of death.

I have seen two little boys, about five and six years old, respectively, being conducted along in triumph, after the solemn rite of circumcision. They were mounted on a white mule and decked out in red, yellow and green garments embroidered in gold, and so buried in flowers and ribbons that one could hardly see the pale little faces, still wearing an expression of frightened bewilderment. Before the mule, which was draped and caparisoned like a beast belonging to royalty, marched three musicians, playing furiously upon a drum, fife and tambourine; on either side and behind came the relatives and friends, one held the children firm in the saddle, another plied them with sweetmeats, others loaded them with caresses, and still others fired off guns in the air, shouting and leaping all the while. Had I not known

the significance of the ceremony I would have taken those unfortunate boys for a pair of victims being led to the sacrifice; at the same time the sight was not devoid of a certain poetic charm, though the poetic part would undoubtedly have appealed to me more strongly had I not been informed that the sacred rite was performed with a barber's razor.

This evening I witnessed a remarkable transformation in the person of Racma, the minister's negro maid-servant. One of the other servants came in search of me, and escorting me on tiptoe to a half-closed door suddenly threw it wide open, exclaiming, "Look at Racma!" I was so dumfounded at the appearance of the negress, whom I was accustomed to see going about in the costume of an extremely modest slave, that for a moment I could not believe my eyes. I would have taken her for a sultana escaped from the imperial palace, the Queen of Timbuctoo, a princess from some unknown kingdom of Central Africa spirited thither on Bisnagar's magic carpet. As I only saw her for a moment I cannot describe her dress very particularly, but there was a general appearance of snow-white and crimson, and a glitter of wide gold braid, all seen through the transparent folds of a great white veil, which combined with the black face to form a wonderful harmony of color and an effect of barbaric magnificence which I have no words to describe. As I drew nearer to study the details more closely all this pomp of color

suddenly disappeared, swallowed up in the lugubrious folds of a Mohammedan sheet, the queen was transformed into a spectre, and the spectre vanished, leaving behind it that sickening wild-beast odor peculiar to the negro race, which at once had the effect of destroying the illusion.

Hearing a tremendous racket in the square I went to the window in time to see a negro, stripped to the waist, ride by on a donkey. Half a dozen Arabs armed with sticks surrounded him, followed by a crowd of yelling boys. Thinking it was some tomfoolery I picked up my glass to take a closer look, but quickly drew back horrified at finding that the stains on the negro's white trousers were made by blood which was trickling down from wounds on his back. The Arabs with sticks were soldiers engaged in beating him. I asked what it all meant. "He stole a hen," said one of the legation soldiers. "Lucky fellow, they are evidently going to let him off without cutting off his hand."

I have been in Tangier seven days, and thus far have not beheld the face of an Arab woman. I feel as though I were at a masquerade party where all the ladies have disguised themselves as spectres, just as children do when they wrap themselves up in sheets. They walk very deliberately, taking long steps, their bodies slightly bent and faces covered with the hem of a sort of linen mantle, beneath which they wear only a long chemise, made with wide

sleeves and fastened around the waist with a cord like a monk's tunic. Nothing can be seen of their persons but the eyes, the hand which conceals the face, the finger-tips colored with henna, and the bare feet, also colored with henna and shod in large, yellow leather slippers. Most of them only allow half the forehead and one eye to appear, the eye being usually dark and the forehead wax color. On encountering a European on a side street some of them will cover the entire face with a quick movement of annoyance, drawing close to the wall as they pass; others risk a glance, half shy, half curious; while a few bold spirits look squarely at you, evidently wishing to attract attention, and then drop their eyes with a smile. Most of them, though, have a sad, weary, discouraged air. The young girls who have not yet been obliged to cover their faces are quite charming-looking, with black eyes, full round cheeks, pale complexions, little round mouths and small hands and feet; but by the time they are twenty they have already become faded, at thirty they are old and at fifty decrepit.

There is in Tangier a sort of monstrosity, an unfortunate creature whom it is disagreeable even to look at; so unlike a human being, indeed, that even a believer finds uneasy doubts arise in his mind. They call her a woman, although she resembles one as little as she does a man. She is a mulatto with a head like an orang-outang, short, shaggy hair, skin drawn tight over her bony frame, and clothing consisting of a few

black rags. Usually she is to be seen lying prone in the middle of the square like a dead person, or else crouched in a corner as silent and motionless as though she were unconscious—that is, at least, when the boys are not tormenting her. When that is the case, she turns upon them with tears and shrieks. She might be fifteen years old or she might be thirty, her deformity makes it impossible to say; she is without friends or home; no one knows her name or whence she came; at night she lies out in the street among the dogs and refuse, and sleeps during most of the day; when she has something to eat she laughs, when she is hungry she cries; in clear weather she is a heap of dust, when it rains, a pile of mud. One night, in passing, one of us wrapped a silver piece in a scrap of paper and slipped it into her hand, so as to give her a pleasant surprise when she awoke; the next day we found her in the middle of the square sobbing violently and exhibiting her hand, all torn and bleeding. Some one had stolen her money and hurt her in the struggle. Three days later I met her, all in tears, mounted on a donkey, supported by two soldiers, and followed by a rabble of boys making game of her. Some one told me they were taking her to the hospital. Only yesterday I saw her again, lying asleep by the carcass of a dog more fortunate than herself.

At last I have found out who those fair, unprepossessing-looking individuals are who bestow upon me,

in passing on the less frequented thoroughfares, a look in which there seems to lurk a continual longing to murder some one. They are Rifs of the Berber race, who acknowledge no law but their muskets, and recognize neither kaïd nor magistrate; audacious pirates, sanguinary bandits in a constant state of rebellion, inhabiting the mountains from the Tetuan coast to the Algerian frontier—the inhabitants, in short, of that renowned Rif in which no stranger may set his foot unless he have the protection of saints and sheiks alike, of which all manner of wild tales are told, the neighboring people referring to it in vague terms as though it were some far-away, inaccessible country. They are frequently to be met in Tangier—tall, robust men, usually enveloped in a dark cloak trimmed with little varicolored tassels; some of them have their faces tattooed in yellow, and all alike are armed with long guns, the red cases of which they wear wrapped around their foreheads like turbans; they go about in groups, talking together in low tones, with bent heads and quick, observant eyes, like parties of desperadoes looking for a victim; and compared with them, the most savage looking Arab I meet looks like a friend of my childhood.

We were seated at dinner after dark one evening when the report of several guns was heard from the square. Running out, we could see, still a good way off, a curious spectacle. The narrow street leading to the Sók di Barra was lighted up for some distance

by large torches held high above the heads of the crowd, and surrounding what appeared to be a box or chest lashed on the back of a horse. This enigmatical procession advanced slowly accompanied by strains of mournful music, drawling nasal singing, and the yelping of dogs. Standing alone for some time in the middle of the square, I puzzled my brains in the effort to make out what the significance of that lugubrious procession might be; perhaps the chest contained a dead body, or a person condemned to death, or a monstrosity, or an animal intended for the sacrifice; this uncertainty gave rise to a feeling of shrinking and repulsion, and, turning away with a shudder, I re-entered the house. A moment later the others came trooping in with the true solution of the mystery. The chest contained—a bride! whom her relatives were conducting to her husband's house.

A crowd of Arab men and women have just gone through the square, preceded by six old men, each carrying a large flag of a different color. They were chanting some prayer loudly together in tones of supplication, and with so mournful an aspect that I found myself quite moved. On inquiry I was told that they were imploring Allah for the grace of rain. I followed them in the direction of the principal Mosque, and on reaching the door—not knowing that in this country Christians are rigorously forbidden to set foot inside the Mosques—was about to enter, when an old Arab threw himself in front of me, and muttering

something in an agitated voice which I understood to mean "Fool, what are you about!" pushed me back, much as one would drag a child away from the edge of a precipice. I was obliged, therefore, to be satisfied with what could be seen from the street of the white-vaulted court-yard, not, however, distressing myself overmuch, after having visited the gigantic Mosques of Constantinople, at being thus excluded from those of Tangier, stripped as they are of all architectural beauty, the minarets alone excepted; and even these heavy square or hexagonal towers, covered with many-colored mosaics, and surmounted by turrets with conical-shaped roofs, are not to be compared with those slight, graceful minarets which shoot heavenwards like shafts of white ivory from the summits of Stambul's seven hills. While I stood gazing into the court-yard a woman made a motion towards me with her hand from behind the ablutionary fountain. I might give the impression that it was a kiss she wafted across, but I will not, the fact being that she shook her fist at me.

I have been up to the Kasbah, the castle on the summit of the hill overlooking Tangier. It is a group of small buildings surrounded by ancient walls, where the authorities, soldiers, and prisoners reside. I found only a couple of sleepy-looking sentinels seated before a doorway at the end of a deserted square, and a few beggars stretched on the ground, scorched by the sun and devoured by flies. From

this point a comprehensive view of Tangier may be obtained, stretching away from the foot of the Kasbah walls and climbing an opposite hill-side. The eye almost shrinks from that expanse of dazzling white, only relieved here and there by the green of some fig tree shut in between two walls. You can make out distinctly the terrace of each little house, the minarets of the Mosques, the legation flags, the battlements on the walls, the solitary shore, the deserted bay, the mountains along the coast—a view sufficiently vast, beautiful and imposing to drive away the most acute attack of homesickness. As I stood gazing at this scene I was startled by hearing, far above me, the faint tremulous notes of a human voice uttering some words in an unfamiliar tongue. I turned and had looked about me some time before I finally discovered a small black speck on the summit of a Mosque in the Kasbah. It was the muezzin calling the faithful to prayer, and pronouncing the names of Allah and Mohammed to all four quarters of the heavens; the voice ceased, and once more the mournful silence of noontide fell upon the scene.

It is a real misfortune to be obliged to have money changed in this country. I gave the tobacconist a French franc, out of which I was to receive ten sous in change. That ferocious-looking Moor thereupon opened a drawer and proceeded to take out and throw down on the counter handful after handful of black, battered-looking coins, until there were enough to

View from the Kasbah.

make a porter's ordinary load; then, counting them over rapidly, he waited expectantly for me to fill my pockets. "I beg your pardon," said I, at the same time trying to get back my franc, "but the fact is I am not strong enough to deal at your shop." We finally compromised, I purchasing enough additional cigars to reduce the change to one pocketful of that ridiculous-looking metal, which I carried off to have explained to me. It is a species of money called *flou*, made of copper, whose unit is worth something less than a centime, and which is diminishing in value every day, as Morocco is flooded with it; and the extent to which the Government has coined and debased it may be understood from the fact that, while it makes all its payments in this money, it will receive only silver or gold. But every evil has its good side, and thus this flou, this scourge of commerce, possesses the inestimable gift of warding off all manner of ills from the fortunate Moroccoans, evil eye in especial, by virtue of the so-called Solomon's seal, a six-pointed star stamped upon the face of each coin, and copied from the original ring which is inclosed in the tomb of the great king, who controlled by means of it both good and bad spirits.

There is only one promenade in Tangier—the beach, which extends from the city off in the direction of Cape Malabat—a beach covered with shells and weeds cast up by the sea and broken by large pools of water rather difficult to avoid at high tide.

This is the Champs Elysée, the Cascine, of Tangier. The promenade-hour is in the afternoon towards sunset. At that time about fifty Europeans may be seen walking up and down in couples and groups, about a hundred feet apart, so that anyone who looks down from the city walls can easily distinguish each individual a mile away. Here, for instance, comes an English lady on horseback, accompanied by a guide; farther on are two Moors from the country; after them the Spanish consul, with his wife; next, a saint; then a French nurse, with two children; then a party of Arab peasant women, who wade through one of the pools with legs bare to above the knees and carefully-covered faces; and beyond them at intervals a cap, a pot-hat, a white hood, a *chignon*, to the very last figure, which surely must be that of the Portuguese Secretary of Legation, wearing the light trousers he got yesterday from Gibraltar; for in this little European colony every one knows everything about every one. If it did not sound disrespectful, I should say that they all looked like so many criminals in forced exile, marching up and down, or a party of travellers who had fallen into the hands of pirates on a desert island, and were watching for the ship to arrive with their ransom-money.

It is almost easier to find one's way about in the immensity of London than among this handful of houses, which could readily be tucked away in one corner of Hyde Park. All these lanes, alleys, passage-

ways, hardly wide enough to pass through, are as much alive as the cells of a beehive, and it is only by giving the most minute attention to every little detail that you can distinguish one neighborhood from another. Thus far, no sooner do I quit the square or the principal street than I promptly lose myself; and in broad daylight it would be easy for a couple of Arabs to pinion me in one of the deserted passage-ways, gag, and cause me to disappear forever from off the face of the earth without any one being a particle the wiser. And yet a Christian can wander alone through that labyrinth by day or night and, among those savages, with greater security than in some of our own cities. The poles of half-a-dozen European flagstaffs rising from a neighboring terrace, ominous indications of an invisible hand, suffice to insure a security which is not always established among us by the presence of armed legions. What a difference between the civilization, for instance, of London and Tangier! But, after all, every place has its advantages. There we have those great palaces and the underground railroad, while here one can go about with his coat unbuttoned.

In all Tangier there is not a single cart or carriage, no noise of workshops, no sound of bells, no cry of street-venders; and you never see any indication of haste among either persons or things. Even the Europeans, utterly at a loss what to do with themselves, spend hours at a time motionless out in the

square. Everything is in a state of repose and invites to repose. I myself, who have been here but a few short days, begin to feel the influence of this soft, indolent life. On reaching the Sôk di Barra to-day, I found myself irresistibly drawn back to the house, where, after reading ten pages, the book dropped from my hand, and when once my head had fallen back on the cushions of the arm-chair, I had to repeat at least two chapters from "Smiles" before I could make up my mind to raise it again, while the mere thought of all the work and worry awaiting me at home exhausts me. These blue heavens, this white city, are images of monotonous, eternal repose; little by little they come to represent to those who inhabit this land the ideal of happiness, of life. That is why my notes are interrupted at this point. The indolence of Africa has vanquished me.

Among the numerous persons who buzzed about the doors of the legation there was one fine-looking young Moor who from the first day especially attracted me. He was one of the handsomest Moors I saw in Morocco—tall, graceful, with black, melancholy eyes and a particularly sweet smile, the face of a lovelorn Sultan whom Danhasch, the evil spirit in the "Thousand and One Nights," might have placed by the side of Princess Badoura instead of Prince Camaralzaman, sure that she would not complain of the change. He was named Mohammed, and was the eighteen-year-old son of a wealthy Moor of Tangier

under the protection of the Italian legation; a fat, harmless Mussulman, whose life having been threatened for some time by an enemy, used to come almost every day with a terrified face to implore the minister's help. Mohammed could talk a little Spanish in the Moorish fashion, that is, with all the verbs in the infinitive, and this had enabled him to scrape acquaintance with my companions. He had been married a few days before, his father having arranged the match in order to make him settle down, and having presented him with a bride of fifteen as beautiful as himself. Marriage, however, had not, to all appearance, worked any great change in him, and he was still, as he told us, a *Turk of the future*, which consists in drinking a glass of wine now and then on the sly, smoking an occasional cigar, being very tired of Tangier, frequenting the society of foreigners, and cherishing dreams of making a trip to Spain. At this juncture, however, the attraction which drew him to us was the hope of obtaining through our influence permission to join the caravan and thus to visit Fez, the great metropolis, his Rome and the dream of his youth; and to this end he showered bows, smiles and hand-pressures upon us with a prodigality and grace sufficient to subjugate the hearts of the entire imperial harem. Like almost all other young Moors of his station, he killed time by lounging about from one street to another, and from group to group, discussing the new horse of one of the ministers, the departure

of a friend for Gibraltar, the arrival of a ship, the latest robbery, all manner of womanish tittle-tattle, or else sitting immovable and taciturn in a corner of the market square, with his thoughts—who can say where?

With this handsome idler is indissolubly connected my recollections of the first Moorish house in which I set foot, and the first Arab repast at which I risked my digestion. One day his father invited us to dinner, a thing I long had wished for. Late one evening, accordingly, preceded by an interpreter and escorted by four servants from the legation, after threading numerous dark, narrow streets, we arrived at an arabesqued door, which swung back at our approach as if by enchantment. Traversing a small, bare, white room, we found ourselves in the heart of the establishment. The first impression was of a great confusion of people, a strange light and a marvellous pomp of color. The host advanced to meet us accompanied by his son and male relatives, all wearing large white turbans; behind them were the domestics, all hooded, and farther still, in dark corners and around the edges of the doors, wondering faces of women and children; while, notwithstanding the presence of so many people, their reigned over all a profound silence. I supposed myself to be in a room until, happening to raise my eyes, I saw the stars. Like all Moorish houses it was a small, square edifice, with a court in the centre, from either side of which

opened two long, narrow rooms without windows, having large arched doorways closed with curtains. The outer walls were white as snow, the cornices of the doorways dentiled, the pavements of mosaic; here and there were small double windows and niches for slippers. The house was in gala dress, the pavements covered with rugs; beside the doors stood high candelabra with red, green and yellow candles; on the tables were mirrors and bunches of flowers. The combined effect of these various objects, in nowise strange in themselves, was odd in the extreme. There was something churchly about it all, and at the same time I was reminded of a theatre or the ball-room of a make-believe royal palace, and yet it had a certain graceful charm of its own. The arrangement of the light and combinations of color were altogether novel, charged with a deep underlying significance that corresponded wonderfully with all we had vaguely felt and imagined about these people; as though, so to speak, it were the light and color of their religion, their philosophy; and beholding the interior of that dwelling, we for the first time gazed into the soul of the race.

After some moments devoted to bows and vigorous hand-shakings, we were invited to view the apartment of the newly-wedded pair. I, with the impertinent curiosity of a European, tried, though vainly, to meet Mohammed's eye. His head was lowered, and he was hiding his blushes beneath the shadow of his

turban. The nuptial-chamber was a long, narrow, lofty apartment, opening on the court. At the farther end, on one side, stood the bride's bed, and opposite it that of Mohammed, both decorated with rich hangings of a gorgeous shade of crimson, fringed around the top. The floor was spread with great Rabât rugs, and the walls hung with yellow and red tapestry. Between the two beds the bride's trousseau was displayed hung on the wall; stays, petticoats, trousers, little garments of strange, unfamiliar cut, combining all the hues of a flower-garden in full bloom; made of wool, of silk, of velvet; braided and covered with gold and silver stars, like the outfit of some child princess—verily a sight to make a writer's head swim and an actress die with envy. From thence we were conducted to the dining-room. Here, too, we found rugs, tapestries, bunches of flowers, great candelabra standing on the floor, couches, cushions of a hundred different colors piled up around the walls, and two richly-decked bedsteads,—it had been the host's wedding-chamber,—near one of which the table was spread contrary to the Arab fashion, which is to place the dishes on the floor and eat without forks or spoons; while, in spite of the Prophet, we caught the sparkle of a circle of venerable bottles calculated to remind us, in the midst of the voluptuousness of a Moorish banquet, that we were still Christians. Before taking our places at table we seated ourselves cross-legged upon a rug around the host's sec-

retary, a handsome turbaned Moor, who made tea, we watching him, and then insisted on our taking three cups apiece, according to custom, all extravagantly sweet and flavored with mint. Between the cups we caressed the pig-tail and shaved head of a pretty youngster of four, Mohammed's youngest brother, who furtively counted our fingers to be quite sure that we had five, like Mohammedans. After finishing our tea we seated ourselves at table—our host, on being pressed, consenting to bear us company—and began partaking one after another of the famous Arab dishes, objects of our ardent curiosity. I attacked the first with great confidence. Merciful heaven! My first impulse was to fall upon the cook. Every shade of expression which might cross the face of a man suddenly attacked by colic, or on hearing of the unexpected failure of his banker, must have appeared upon mine. In an instant I understood perfectly how a race who ate such food must necessarily believe in another God and hold essentially different views of human life from our own. I can give no idea of the taste left in my mouth except by comparing myself to some unfortunate condemned to swallow the contents of all the bottles and boxes in a hair-dresser's establishment. There was a suggestion of soap, wax, pomatum, of unguents, dyes, cosmetics; of everything, in short, most unsuited to enter a human mouth. At each new dish we exchanged glances of terror and dismay. The materials must have been good, too,

in themselves, for there was poultry, mutton, game and fish; huge dishes of inviting appearance, but everything swimming in the most horrible sauces, greasy, anointed, perfumed, prepared in such a manner that a comb seemed a more fitting instrument to dip into them than a fork; and yet it was absolutely necessary to swallow some of each, so I comforted myself by repeating inwardly those lines of Aleardi:

> Oh nella vita
> Qualche delitto icognito ne pesa,
> Qualche cosa si espia.

The only eatable thing was the roast mutton. Not even the Kuskussú, the Moorish national dish, prepared with wheat ground about as fine as bran, steamed and dressed with milk or broth—a perfidious imitation of *risotto*—not even this famous Kuskussú, which many Europeans really like, could I succeed in swallowing without changing color. And there actually was one of our party who partook of everything; a consoling fact, however, since it demonstrates clearly that the great men are not all dead yet in Italy. At every mouthful our host interrogated us with anxious looks, and we, with wildly-rolling eyes, would exclaim in chorus, "Excellent! delicious!" and then hastily swallow a glass of wine to revive our sinking courage. At a certain point in the repast there came a sudden burst of music from the court, which made us all jump to our feet. It was a party

of three musicians come, according to Moorish custom, to enliven the feast; three Arabs with big eyes and hooked noses, dressed in red and white, one playing a sort of lute, another a mandolin, and the third a small drum. They seated themselves just outside the door of our apartment, near a small niche in which they deposited their slippers, we resumed our places, the dishes were once more passed around in turn (there were twenty-three in all, if I remember rightly, not counting the fruit), our expressions continued to change, and the corks to fly. Little by little our frequent libations, the scent of the flowers, the fumes of the aloes rising from chased perfumery-stands from Fez, and that wild Arab music which, by dint of continually repeating the same mysterious lament, ends by taking possession of the soul with irresistible force, caused a sort of silent, mystic intoxication to steal over our senses, and for a few minutes each one of us seemed to feel the pressure of a turban on his brow, of a Sultana's head upon his breast. Dinner finally ended, we arose and scattered ourselves about the room, the courtyard and vestibule, gazing around and examining everything with childish curiosity. In every dark corner stood an Arab, erect as a statue, wrapped in his long white cloak. The curtains had been drawn across the door of the nuptial-chamber, and through the crack could be seen a great stir and movement of veiled heads; lights came and went in the upper windows; we could hear the rustling gar-

ments and lowered voices of invisible persons; all around and about us there was a ferment of unseen life, telling us that although we were within the walls we were still outside the home; that the beauty, the tenderness, the soul of the family had taken refuge in its secret recesses; that we were the exhibition, and that the house remained for us a mystery. Later on the governess of the minister's household appeared from one of the doorways; she had been to call on the bride, and exclaimed, as she passed us, "Ah! if you could only see her; such a dear little rosebud; a creature from Paradise!" And still the music kept up its wailing sound, the smoke from the burning aloes ascended through the heavy air, and we wandered and gazed, our imaginations working, working, and still working, when at last we issued from that glowing, perfumed atmosphere, and in profound silence threaded our way by the light of a single lantern through the narrow, gloomy streets.

One evening the news was passed about from mouth to mouth that the long-expected arrival of a party of Aissowich would take place on the following day. The Aissowich are one of the principal religious confraternities of Morocco, founded, like all the rest, through the direct inspiration of God by a saint named Sídi Mohammed-ben-Aïssa, born at Mequinez about two centuries ago, whose biography consists of a long, rambling recital of miracles and marvellous adventures variously recounted. The

Mosque of the Aissowich.

Aissowieh claim to have won the special protection of Heaven by their constant prayers and the exercise of certain peculiar rites through which they keep alive in their hearts not faith, exactly, but a sort of exaltation, a religious fever, a divine frenzy, which breaks out occasionally into wild acts of extravagance and ferocity. They have a large Mosque at Fez which is the chief establishment of their order, and from whence they issue forth once a year and spread themselves in detachments throughout the entire empire, collecting such members of the society as may be scattered about in the various towns and provinces, to take part in the annual feasts. Their rites, resembling somewhat those of the Howling and Dancing Dervishes of the East, consist in a sort of frenzied dance accompanied by leaps, contortions, and cries, by dint of which they work themselves up until they become more and more excited, more furious, more frantic, and utterly beside themselves, grind wood and iron with their teeth, burn their flesh with red-hot coals, cut themselves with knives, eat mud and stones, tear live animals asunder and devour the reeking flesh, and finally drop to the ground spent and unconscious. The Aissowieh whom I saw at Tangier did not indulge in any such excesses as these, and I imagine that very few, and they seldom, go to such lengths in these days; but what I did see was enough to make an indelible impression upon my mind. The Belgian minister invited us to witness the sight from the ter-

race of his house which overlooks the principal street of Tangier, along which the procession would have to pass to reach the Mosque. They were expected to arrive at about ten o'clock in the morning. As I came down from the Sôk di Barra gate about an hour earlier the street was already thronged with people, and the roofs of the houses covered with Arab and Jewish women, the brilliant colors of whose dresses made the white terraces look like great boxes of flowers. At the appointed hour all eyes were turned towards the gate at the end of the street, and in a few minutes the forerunners of the party came in sight. The whole street was so crowded with people that until they got quite near it was impossible to distinguish the Aissowieh from the spectators. For some little time I could see nothing but a swaying mass of hooded heads, and in their midst, other bare ones which appeared and disappeared, their owners being apparently engaged in knocking one another about. Above the heads floated a few flags, and from time to time a simultaneous cry arose from many throats. The crowd slowly advanced, little by little we began to note a certain method in the movements of all those heads. The foremost formed a circle, those behind them a double line, beyond them was another circle, and so on. But of this order I cannot be perfectly sure either, for in my eager curiosity to observe the individuals themselves as closely as possible it is very likely that the exact order of the

movements of the whole may have escaped me. In the course of a few moments the leaders of the party were directly below our terrace. My first impression was a mingling of horror and pity. There were two lines of men facing one another, wearing cloaks and long white tunics, holding on to each other by the hands, or arms or shoulders, keeping time with their feet, swaying, turning their heads from side to side, and giving vent to a dull, murmuring sound, broken by sobs, chokings, gaspings, and interjections of wrath and despair. Nothing but Rubens' *The Possessed by a Devil*, or Goya's *Raised from the Dead*, or Poe's *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*, could give the faintest idea of the look on those faces. They were livid, convulsed, with staring eyes and foaming mouths; feverish, epileptic; some wearing a fixed, mysterious smile, others the whites of whose eyes could only be seen, others contracted as if with some fearful spasm, and others which were like dead men's faces. From time to time they would make a strange gesture to one another with swinging arms, and then that simultaneous cry would arise, piercing and terrible, as of persons receiving a death-wound; then proceeding a few steps further they would again begin to dance, groaning and striking themselves, a confused, surging mass of cowls, wide sleeves, hairy tufts, long locks, thick shocks of hair divided up into snake-like bands. A few of the more ardent spirits went up and down between the

lines staggering like drunken men and striking against the walls and doorways; others seemed to be rapt in a sort of ecstasy, walking slowly along erect, with heads thrown back, half-closed eyes and hanging arms; others, completely exhausted and no longer able either to cry out or stand erect, were supported under either armpit by their companions, or swept unresistingly along by the crowd. The dance became more and more disorderly and the noise more deafening. Heads were shaken until it seemed as though the collar-bones must break, and terrible gaspings came from surcharged lungs. From all those bodies, reeking with perspiration, there arose a sickening smell like that from a cage of wild animals. From time to time one or another of those convulsed faces would suddenly be raised towards our terrace, and a pair of wild-looking eyes gazing full into my own cause me to draw precipitately back. From moment to moment my inward impression of the scene would undergo a change. Now it seemed nothing but an extravagant masquerade, and I was tempted to laugh; then it suggested the revels of a crowd of lunatics, of sick persons in the delirium of fever, of drunken galley-slaves, of men condemned to death who were endeavoring to deaden their terror, and my heart would suddenly contract, only to forget the next moment everything but the savage beauty of the scene and lose myself in artistic enjoyment. But little by little the underlying mean-

ing of that rite took possession of my mind; the sensations which those frenzies were the interpretation of and which every one of us must often and often have experienced, the struggle of the human soul laboring under the burden of the infinite, awoke in me, and half-unconsciously I put that tumult into words as I understood it. Yes, I feel thee, oh, mysterious and tremendous power; I struggle in the grasp of thine invisible hand; the idea of thee oppresses me; I cannot contain it; my heart is bursting, my reason departs, this clay wrapping is rent asunder!

And so they passed on, crowding by, pale, dishevelled, emitting those piercing cries with what seemed to be their dying breath. A stumbling old man, the image of a frenzied Lear, detached himself from the procession and made as though he would have dashed his brains out against a neighboring wall had his companions not dragged him back in time. One young man fell full length on the ground unconscious; another, his hair floating over his shoulders, his face buried in his hands, went by with long strides, his body bowed to the earth, like one accursed of God. There were Bedouins, Moors, Berbers, negroes, giants, mummies, satyrs with faces of cannibals and saints, birds of prey, sphinxes, Indian idols, furies, fauns, devils. There may have been between three and four hundred, and in less than an hour they had all passed. The last to come were two women (women being admitted to

the order as well) who looked as though they had been buried alive and had burst open their tombs—two walking skeletons, dressed all in white, their hair hanging over their faces, with staring eyes and foaming mouths, completely exhausted, yet still animated by convulsive movements of which they themselves seemed no longer conscious; writhing, shrieking, stumbling as they went, while between them rose the gigantic figure of an old man, with a face like a hundred-years-old wizard, dressed in a sweeping tunic, who, stretching out two long, emaciated arms, laid his hands on the head of one and the other of them in turn with a gesture of protection, helping and raising them again when they fell. Behind these three apparitions, pushing and jostling one another, came a throng of armed Arabs, women, beggars and children, the entire barbarous howling mob a mass of human misery, which, pouring into the square, disappeared from our view.

Another interesting sight to be witnessed in Tangier is the feast which is celebrated on Mohammed's birthday. I think it possibly made a particularly vivid impression on me owing to my having happened on it rather accidentally.

Returning one day from a walk along the shore, I heard the sound of guns being fired off in the Sôk di Barra. Hastening thither, I at first could hardly recognize the place, so completely was it metamorphosed. From the city walls to the very summit of

the hill it was swarming with Arabs, an entirely white and extraordinarily animated crowd. There were, I believe, only about three thousand persons in all, but they mingled and moved about so constantly as to appear countless—a curious optical delusion. Upon every mound, as though seated upon so many balconies, were groups of Arab women, squatted on the ground in the Eastern fashion, immovable, their faces turned towards the lower end of the Sôk. On one side the crowd, separating in two dark masses, left an open space between, down which a troop of horsemen hurled themselves full tilt, in line of battle, at the same time discharging their long guns; on the other, groups of men and women had gathered about the various performers—some playing ball, others fencing or dancing, serpent-charmers, story-tellers, musicians, soldiers. From the summit of the hill, beneath a pointed tent open in front, gleamed the huge white turban of the Vice-Governor of Tangier, who, seated on the ground, in the midst of a circle of Moors, presided over the *fête*. From that point one could see below in the crowd the soldiers belonging to the various legations, dressed in their pompous scarlet caftans, a few high hats, an occasional parasol belonging to one of the consuls' ladies, and the two artists, Ussi and Bisco, portfolio and pencil in hand; beyond the crowd Tangier; beyond Tangier the sea. The reports of the guns, shouts of the horsemen, ringing of the water-carriers' bells, gay cries of the

women, the music of pipes, horns, and tambourines, all combined to form a hurly-burly not to be described, and added not a little to the strange effect produced by that wild scene under the dazzling rays of the noonday sun.

Curiosity attracted me in a dozen different directions at once, but a cry of admiration from some women near by drew me first of all to a group of cavalry. There were a dozen tall fellows, wearing peaked fezes, white capes, orange, red, and blue caftans, and in their midst a youth dressed with effeminate elegance, the son of the Governor of the Rif. Drawing up in line at the foot of the city walls, with faces turned towards the open country, the Governor's son in the middle, they raised their hands, and with one accord broke into a run. For the first few paces there was some slight uncertainty and disorder, then those twelve horses, with loosened bridles and bellies even with the ground, seemed to be parts of a single body—a furious monster with twelve heads, many-colored, devouring space. The riders, nailed to their saddles, with heads erect and cloaks floating in the wind, raised their guns aloft, pressed them convulsively against their shoulders, and fired, at the same time raising a simultaneous cry of triumphant fury, then vanished in a cloud of dust and smoke. In a few moments they slowly reappeared, sitting their foaming and bloody steeds in attitudes of weary disdain, and presently the performance was

re-enacted. At each fresh charge the Arab women, like ladies at a tournament, greeted the performers with a peculiar cry of their own, consisting in the rapid repetition of the monosyllable *Ù*, which sounds like the shrill exclamations of delighted children.

Next I went to watch a party of about fifteen Arabs play ball—boys, full-grown men, and old ones with white beards; some had guns slung across their shoulders, others wore swords. The ball was of leather, about the size of an orange. One of them took it, dropped it on the ground, and kicked it in the air, all the others trying to catch it before it fell, and the one who succeeded doing as the first had done. Thus the group of players, intent on following the ball, got farther and farther away, until at last with one accord they returned to the spot they started from. But the curious thing about this game consisted in the movements of the players. They used dance-steps, measured gestures, actors' poses, preserving a mien that was almost ceremonious, and contradictory as well, being both courteous and violent, circling about with a sort of rhythm and system the rule for which I was unable to discover. They ran and leaped all together in a contracted space, pressing close to one another and intermingling without interchanging a blow or making the slightest disturbance. The ball flew up in the air, disappeared, bounded in among their legs and above their heads as though no one had touched it and it

were being blown hither and thither by contrary winds, and all of this strenuous effort was unaccompanied by a word, an exclamation, or a smile. Old and young alike were perfectly silent and serious, and as intent upon the game as though it had been some melancholy task imposed upon them, no sound being heard other than their panting breath and the patter of their slippers.

A little farther on some negroes were dancing in the midst of another circle of spectators to the sound of a fife and a small conical drum, beaten with a wooden stick curved like a half-moon. There were eight of them, great powerful fellows, as black and shiny as ebony, wearing nothing but a long snow-white tunic fastened around the waist by a green cord. Seven of them holding one another by the hand formed a circle about the eighth, and they all danced together, or rather kept time to the music with an indescribable movement of the hips which set my toes in motion, and hardly any change of position, wearing upon their faces at the same time that satyr-like smile, that expression of purely animal enjoyment of stupid bliss peculiar to the negro race. While I stood watching this scene two boys of about ten, who were among the lookers-on, gave a sample of the ferocity of the Arab nature which I am not likely soon to forget. Quite suddenly, and with no apparent cause, they leaped upon one another, and closing like a couple of tigers, began to tear and bite

each other's faces and necks with teeth and nails, and with a fury that was really horrible to witness. Two strong men, by using all their force, succeeded, with some difficulty, in separating them, and were obliged to keep hold of them to prevent their renewing the attack.

The fencers were very funny. There were four fencing with sticks in pairs, and it would be impossible to give any idea of the extravagance and awkwardness of the "school." I call it a "school" advisedly, because I saw fencing of the same style in other cities in Morocco. They indulge in movements like those of a rope-dancer, perfectly objectless leaps in the air, contortions of the body, kicks and blows carefully announced beforehand with wild flourishes of the arms, every movement made with a kindly deliberation that would allow one of our fencers ample time to stand on guard, and each combatant armed with an enormous weight of wood, without there being the smallest risk of anyone receiving so much as a knock. The group of Arab spectators stood, however, in open-mouthed admiration, a number of them stealing looks at me from time to time to see if I were not struck with astonishment. Wishing to gratify them, I pretended to be mightily pleased, upon which some of them drew closer together in order to push me a little more to the front, and I presently found myself surrounded on all sides by Arabs, and had the chance I had been wanting to make a closer

study of the race, of those barely perceptible movements of the nostrils, lips and eyelids, of the marks on the skin, and the *odor*—in short, of all those minor details which escape the observer as he passes along the streets, but which nevertheless seem to explain so much. One of the soldiers belonging to the Italian legation espying me from a distance hemmed in in this way, and imagining that I was an unwilling prisoner, insisted upon liberating me whether I would or no by means of a free use of elbows and fists.

The group gathered about the story-teller was the smallest of any, but the most striking. I joined it just as, the customary opening prayer being ended, the orator was beginning his tale. He was a man of about fifty, almost black, with a jetty beard and great shining eyes, enveloped like all the Morocco story-tellers in a large white cloth bound about the head with a strip of camel's hair, which lent him something of the dignity of a priest of ancient times. Standing erect in the middle of his circle of auditors, he held forth slowly and in high-pitched tones, to the accompaniment of a drum and an oboe. He may have been recounting some tale of love, or the adventures of a celebrated bandit, or the vicissitudes of a sultan's career. I could not understand a single word, but his gestures were so expressive, his voice so sympathetic, his face so speaking, that from time to time I was able to catch a ray of meaning. He seemed to be describing a long journey; he imitated the gait of

the weary horse, pointed to the measureless stretch of horizon, searched for any sign of water, let his head and hands droop like those of a man utterly spent; then all at once, descrying some object far off in the distance, he seemed at first to hesitate, now doubting, now believing the evidence of his eyes, until plucking up courage he pushed forward, and finally returning thanks to Allah, and laughing aloud for joy, sank down with a great sigh of relief in the shade of a delicious oasis which he had abandoned all hope of reaching. The audience remained silent and breathless throughout the recital, reflecting in their faces every word uttered by the story-teller; and standing thus with their souls in their eyes, they revealed fully the frank, ingenuous nature which lies dormant beneath those savage exteriors. The orator moved to the right and left, sprang forward, crouched on the ground, covered his face with his hands, lifted his arms to heaven, and raised his voice as he grew gradually more and more excited; the musicians played with ever-increasing fervor; the listeners drew closer together, becoming more breathless as the tale went on, until at last it reached its climax in a thundering cry, the instruments flew up in the air, and the group, much affected, dispersed, to make room for a fresh audience.

Three musicians, who had succeeded in attracting a larger crowd than anyone else, made, by their appearance, movements and music, a very extraordinary

impression upon me. They were all three bow-legged, very tall, and curved from head to foot like those grotesque figures which stand for capital letters in certain illustrated papers. One played a flute, another a small drum with little bells attached to it, and the third an amazing instrument, like a clarionet combined in some remarkable way with two hunting-horns, which gave forth the most unheard-of sounds. These three men, clad in a few rags, pressed close to one another's sides as though they had been strapped together, and playing continuously and desperately their one solitary air, the same, no doubt, that they had been playing for the past fifty years, revolved slowly around in a circle. I do not know how they moved; it seemed to be a cross between dancing and walking, certain quick motions like a rooster pecking, certain liftings of the shoulders, done by all three simultaneously and mechanically, and so unlike any actions common among us, so altogether new and odd, that the longer I watched them the more puzzled I became, feeling as though they must be the expression of an idea or have their origin in some peculiarity of the Arab race; and even now I often find myself thinking of them. Those three poor wretches, dripping with perspiration, played and danced about for upwards of an hour with an unalterable gravity, listened to by some hundred or more persons standing in a close, immovable group, the sun shining full in their eyes, and giving no sign either of pleasure or annoyance.

The noisiest gathering of all was that surrounding the soldiers—a dozen men, old and young, some wearing white caftans and others clad only in a tunic, this one with a fez, that one with a hood, armed with flint-lock muskets as long as spears, into which they poured powder, it not being customary to employ cartridges in Morocco. An old veteran directed the exercises. First they placed themselves six on one side and six on the other, facing one another. At a given signal they changed places on a run and knelt with one knee on the ground; then one of them sang something, I do not know what, in a shrill falsetto, all trills and quavers; this lasted some moments, and was listened to in profound silence; then with one accord they all leaped to their feet, formed a circle, and bounding high in the air with a wild shout of delight reversed their guns and fired into the ground. No one can conceive of the rapidity and fury, the diabolic charm and frantic merriment of that noisy, brilliant performance, seen amidst clouds of smoke, beneath the full blaze of the sun. A few steps from me there stood among the spectators a little Arab girl of ten or twelve, not yet veiled, with one of the prettiest faces I saw in Tangier. She had a clear, delicate olive complexion and big blue eyes, stretched just then to their fullest extent with wonder at beholding a sight far more marvellous to her than the feats of the soldiers. This was myself in the act of drawing off my gloves—that second skin, as the Arab boys say,

which Christians put off and on at will and without hurting themselves in the least.

I hesitated whether or no to witness the snake-charmers' performance, but curiosity finally getting the better of repugnance, I approached the group. These so-called snake-charmers belong to the order of the Aissowieh, and are supposed to derive from their patron, Ben-Aïssa, power to receive the bite of any creature, no matter how venomous, without incurring the least harm. Many travellers, indeed, gifted themselves with strong faith, declare that they have actually seen these persons receive bites which drew blood, without suffering any ill effect, from serpents whose deadly nature was proved shortly afterwards by experiments made upon animals, and they add that they have been unable to discover by what means those clever charlatans succeed in rendering the bite innocuous. The Aissowan I saw presented a spectacle quite horrible enough, though bloodless. He was a small sturdy Arab, with a pale, hangdog face, hairy as a Merovingian king, wearing a sort of blue tunic, which fell to the ground. As I approached he was skipping grotesquely around a goat-skin spread on the earth, from beneath which peeped the mouth of a bag in which the snakes were confined. As he jumped and leaped about he sang a melancholy song to the accompaniment of a flute, apparently an invocation addressed to his saint. This concluded, he chattered and gesticulated for some time to induce

A Snake Charmer.

the spectators to throw him money. Then kneeling in front of the goat-skin he thrust his hand in the bag and drew forth with much care a long, greenish serpent, very lively indeed, which he carried around for the audience to examine, and then began to handle in all manner of ways, much as though it had been a bit of rope. He grasped it around the neck, held it up by the tail, bound it about his temples, hid it in his breast, twisted it in and out of the holes of a tambourine, threw it on the ground, held it down with his foot, pinioned it under his arm, the horrible beast meanwhile rearing its flat head, darting out its tongue and writhing about with those flexible, repulsive, abject movements that seem the very incarnation of cowardice and treachery, shooting out of its villainous little eyes all the rage that convulsed its body, but never making any attempt to bite the hand that held it. When he was tired of these exercises the Aissowan, taking hold of the snake by the back of its neck, thrust a small piece of iron in its mouth to hold it open, and then carried it around for the nearer spectators to examine its teeth, an inspection that seemed to me superfluous, seeing that no one had been bitten, if indeed the poisoned substance had not been already extracted. After this, grasping the creature firmly with both hands, he took the tail in his mouth and began to work his jaws; the beast writhed frantically, and I left in disgust. Just then our chargé d'affaires appeared in the Sók. The Vice-Governor, seeing him

from the top of the hill, went down to meet and conduct him to his tent, where presently all the members of the future caravan, myself included, were assembled Before long the musicians and soldiers had collected in front of the tent, and the people following, a great semi-circle of Arabs was formed, the men in front, the gentler sex in groups in the rear, and forthwith there broke out a most diabolical uproar—dancing, shouting, singing, cries, reports of fire-arms—which was kept up for more than an hour, amid dense clouds of smoke, and accompanied by unearthly music and the shrill cries of the women and children, to the paternal satisfaction of the Vice-Governor and our intense delight. Before it ceased the chargé d'affaires slipped a small yellow object into the hand of one of the Arab soldiers with orders to give it to the director of the festivities. The man presently returned and delivered the latter's somewhat singular message of thanks translated into Spanish: "The Italian ambassador has performed a good action; may Allah bless every hair on his head." The fête kept up until sunset—such a strange fête as it was! Three water-carriers sufficed to satisfy the wants of all that throng for half a day beneath the burning rays of an African sun. A *muzuneh* was possibly the largest coin put into circulation by that great concourse of people; the only pleasures indulged in, those of sight and sound; no flirting; not a single drunken person; no one stabbed! really

nothing at all in common with the fêtes of civilized peoples.

In addition to visiting the various sights, I and my future travelling companions used to take long walks in the country surrounding Tangier, which is no less curious and well worth seeing than the city itself. All around the outside of the walls extends a belt of pleasure and kitchen-gardens, the property, for the most part, of the foreign ministers and consuls, and almost all of them neglected, yet filled with a marvellous vegetation. There are long rows of aloes, looking like huge lances, stuck in the middle of a bunch of dirks with curved points, that being the shape of the leaves. The Arabs utilize the thorns and leaf-fibre to sew up wounds. There are Indian figs, too, *Kermus del Inde*, as they are called in the Moorish tongue, very tall, with leaves a finger thick, which fall in such numbers as almost to block up the paths; common figs, in whose shadow a dozen tents might be pitched; oaks, acacias, oleanders, shrubs of all kinds which interlace with the branches of the taller trees, and, together with the grass, vines, reeds and hedges, form a thick, inextricable undergrowth, beneath which paths and ditches are alike hidden. In many places it is necessary to feel one's way along. You pass from one property to another, across broken-down hedges and over fences lying prone upon the ground, through grass and flowers reaching waist-high, and without seeing anyone at all. A few little white

houses half-hidden among the trees and an occasional well from whence, by means of small trenches, the ground is irrigated, are the only objects which suggest the idea of either ownership or labor. Often, had I not been accompanied by the staff-captain, an admirable guide, I should certainly have lost my way in that confused mass of vegetation, and as it was we were obliged to keep hailing one another, like people in a labyrinth, in order not to become separated. We used to enjoy plunging into that sea of green, swimming in it, and forcing our way with hands and head and feet, like two savages let loose in their native forests after languishing in prison. Beyond this belt of gardens and parks there are no more houses, trees, hedges, or any division of the land. It is an expanse of green hill and valley and undulating plain, where an occasional herd of cattle may be seen grazing with no keeper in sight, and a few loose horses gallop about. On one single occasion I recollect seeing someone engaged in cultivating the earth; an Arab was driving a donkey and a goat hitched to a tiny plough of curious design, probably the shape of those in use four thousand years ago; he was making a furrow so small as scarcely to be visible, in a field covered with stones and weeds. I was assured that it was not uncommon to see a woman and a donkey hitched together to the plough, which may serve to give some idea of the agricultural condition of Morocco. The only fertilizer put on the ground is the

ashes of the stubble burned after harvest, and the only care taken to avoid exhausting the fertility of the soil consists in letting the grass grow for pasture every third year after planting wheat and maize in the other two. Notwithstanding this precaution, the ground becomes poor after a few crops have been grown, and then these wandering farmers move on in search of new land to till, which in its turn is abandoned for the first. Thus only a very small part of the arable ground is under cultivation at one time; ground which, even with such treatment yields a hundredfold on what is sown.

The most beautiful excursion of all was to Cape Spartel, the *Ampelusium* of the ancients, which forms the northwest extremity of the African continent—a mountain of gray-stone, about a thousand feet high, running out into the sea in a bold promontory, with great caverns at its base, dedicated in ancient times to Hercules—*specus Herculi sacer.* From the summit rises the famous light-house built only a few years ago and maintained by contributions from most of the European powers. We climbed the tower up to the very lantern itself, which throws its brilliant warning to a distance of twenty-five miles. From thence the eye roams over two continents and two seas. You can see the outermost bounds of the Mediterranean and the limitless horizon of the vast Atlantic—the Sea of Darkness—Bahr-ed-Dholma,—as the Arabs call it—beating against the foot of the

rocks. You see the Spanish coast from Cape Trafalgar to Cape Algesiras, the African coast from the Mediterranean to the Ceuta Mountains, the *septem fratres* of the Romans, and vague, far away, the mighty Rock of Gibraltar, that eternal sentinel stationed at the portal of the old continents, that mysterious boundary of the ancient world, now the *Favola vile ai navigante industri.*

In all these expeditions we met but a very few people, usually Arabs on foot, who passed without looking at us, or sometimes a Moor on horseback, a personage of some importance, either by reason of his wealth or office, accompanied by a troop of servants, who threw us a disdainful glance in passing. The women concealed their faces more jealously than in town; some of them muttering and others turning their backs on us brusquely. Sometimes, however, an Arab would stop directly in our way, and, looking us straight in the eye, murmur a few words almost in the tone of one who asks a favor, and then move off without looking back. As a rule, we could not understand what was said, but it was explained to us later that they were begging us to pray that Allah would grant their petitions. It seems that there is a common superstition among the Arabs that the prayers of Mussulmans are so agreeable to God that He usually delays answering them in order to prolong the pleasure, while the prayer of an infidel, a dog—that is, a Christian or a Jew—

Waterfall Bridge near Tongiee.

is, on the contrary, so obnoxious that, in order to get rid of it, He grants it *ipso facto*. The only friendly countenances we ever met were those of the Jewish boys, who circled around in troops, riding their donkeys up and down the hills, and shouting out gayly to us as they galloped by, *Buenos dias, caballeros!*

Notwithstanding, however, the varied and novel life we were leading in Tangier, we were all impatient to be off in order to get back in the month of June, before the great heat sets in. The chargé d'affaires had dispatched a courier to Fez to announce that the embassy was ready to start, but at least ten days must elapse before his return could be hoped for. Private information came that the escort was already on its way; others said that it had not yet started; everything was as uncertain and contradictory as if this much-talked-of Fez lay two thousand miles from the coast, instead of two hundred and twenty kilometres. We rather liked this, though, as it made our fifteen-days' trip assume the importance of a long journey, and threw around Fez the vague fascination of a strange, mysterious place. This impression was, in fact, much strengthened by the extraordinary tales that were told us of the city and its inhabitants, and of the perils of the journey by those who had accompanied other embassies. We were informed that they had been surrounded by thousands of horsemen, who greeted them with a furious, close fire at the risk of blind-

ing them; that balls had whistled by their ears; that it was more than likely that some of us Italians would get an ounce or two of lead in our bodies that had been intended for the white cross on our flag—an object which the Arabs would be sure to regard as a direct insult to Mohammed. They talked to us about scorpions, snakes, tarantulas, clouds of grasshoppers, spiders, huge toads, all of which we would encounter on the road and in our own tents. They painted the entrance of the embassy into Fez in gloomy colors, alluding to whirlwinds of horsemen, dense hostile crowds of people, and dark, covered streets encumbered with the carcasses of dead animals. They prophesied all manner of misfortunes during our sojourn in the metropolis—mortal inertia, violent dysentery, rheumatism, ferocious mosquitoes, as compared with which our own are positive blessings; and, last of all, they spoke of homesickness, under which head they recounted the mournful history of a young artist from Brussels who had accompanied the Belgian embassy, and at the end of a week was seized with such desperate melancholy that the minister was obliged to send him back post-haste to Tangier, in order to avoid having him die on his hands; and this was actually so. All of these direful accounts, however, only served to whet our impatience. I recalled with amusement, too, an ironical sally of my mother. After having vainly attempted to persuade me to renounce the trip to Morocco on account of the wild

beasts, "Oh, well," said she, "no doubt you are right, after all. What does it matter if a panther does devour you? The newspapers will, no doubt, publish a full account of it!" After all this, it is easy to imagine how we bounded from our chairs when, one day, Signor Salomone Aflalo, second legation dragoman, appeared at the dining-room door and pronounced in sonorous tones the words, "The escort has arrived from Fez!" With the escort had also come the horses, mules, camels, grooms, tents, the itinerary fixed by the Sultan, and the permission to start. It was necessary, however, to wait still a few days longer in order that the men and beasts might have a chance to rest. The latter were taken up to the kasbah, whither I went the following day to see them. There were forty-five horses, including those of the escort, twenty saddle-mules, and more than fifty pack-mules, to which a good many others, hired in Tangier, were added later on. The horses, like all others in Morocco, were small and slightly built, the mules sturdy. Both saddles and packs were covered with red cloth, and the stirrups made of a wide piece of iron, turned up on both sides in such a manner as to support and inclose the entire foot, serving at once as a spur and a weapon of defence. The poor creatures were almost all of them lying on the ground, exhausted more by the insufficiency of food than the length of the journey, a portion of what should have gone to them having very probably been converted

into money for their own pockets by their caretakers. A few of the soldiers belonging to the escort were present. They at once drew near and began to talk, trying to make us understand, by means of gestures, that the journey had been fatiguing, that they had suffered much from heat and thirst, but that, by the grace of Allah, they had arrived safe and sound. There were negroes and mulattoes among them, all enveloped alike in long white capes ; tall, angular men, with hard faces, cruel-looking teeth, and fierce eyes, whose expression made us feel that a second escort would not be out of place to interpose between them and us in the event of anything happening. While my companions were gesticulating I occupied myself in searching quietly about among the mules for the one which should have the mildest, most tractable and kindly expression in its eyes. It proved to be a white one with an arabesqued saddle, and to its tender mercies I determined to intrust my life. From henceforth until our return all the hopes of Italian literature in Morocco were pinned to that saddle. We next proceeded to the Sôk di Barra, where the principal tents had been pitched. It gave us the greatest delight to gaze upon those small canvas dwellings, beneath which we were to sleep for thirty nights amid unknown solitudes, to hear and see so many wonderful things, and to labor, one on a geographical chart, another on an official report, another on a picture, another on a book, forming among us a little

moving Italy travelling across the empire of the sherifs. They were circular-pointed tents, some of them large enough to accommodate more than twenty persons; all lofty, and made of double canvas, with sky-blue stripes, and ornamented on top with big metal balls. Most of them were the property of the Sultan, and who knows how many seraglio belles may have slept beneath them in the course of their famous journeys from Fez to Mequinez and from Mequinez to Morocco! In a corner of the camp stood a number of the escort soldiers, and in front of them, on foot, a strange personage awaiting the arrival of the minister. He was a man of about thirty-five, a stout mulatto of stately appearance, wearing a large white turban, a light-blue cloak, red trousers, and a sabre in a leather case with a rhinoceros-skin handle. Presently the minister arrived and presented him to us. It was the commander of the escort, a general in the Imperial army, named Hamed Ben Kasen Buhamei, who had been detailed to accompany us to Fez and back again to Tangier, and to answer with his own head for the safety of ours. He shook our hands with much affability, and expressed, through the interpreter, his hope that we would have a pleasant trip. His face and manner reassured me completely with regard to the teeth and eyes of the soldiers whom we had seen in the kasbah. He was not handsome, but his countenance gave evidence of a kindly disposition as well as a quick, active mind.

He must have been able to read, write, and cast up accounts; have been, in short, one of the most highly-educated generals in the army, for the Minister of War to have assigned to him so important and delicate a mission. The distribution of the tents was made in his presence. One was assigned to Art; the next largest after that of the ambassador was taken possession of by the naval commander, the staff-captain, the vice-consul and myself, and from that moment it was foreseen that that would be the noisiest tent in camp. Another very large one was selected to serve as the dining-room; then others were chosen for the doctor, interpreters, cooks, servants, and legation soldiers, the commander of the escort and his men having separate tents; others still were to be added on the day of departure. In short, it was easy to see that we were to have a very beautiful encampment, and I could already feel an ardent desire beginning to stir within me to plunge into descriptive narrative.

The following day our chargé d'affaires, accompanied by the commander and the captain, went to call upon the representative of the Imperial Government, Sidi-Bargas, who exercises to a certain extent the functions of a Minister of Foreign Affairs at Tangier. I joined them, being curious to see a Minister of Foreign Affairs who (unless his salary has been raised in the last twenty years, a most unlikely thing) receives seventy-five francs a month from his Government, including all sums designed to defray any official ex-

penses he may incur—a sumptuous amount, however, as compared with the Governor's salary, which is only fifty francs; and it is not to be supposed that this office is a *sine cura*, whose duties can be put off on the first person who comes along. The famous Sultan, Abd-Er-Rahman, for instance, who reigned from 1822 to 1859, could find no one fitted for the position but a certain Sidi-Mohammed-el-Khetib, a sugar- and coffee-merchant, who, while he exercised the duties of a minister, continued to trade regularly at Tangier and Gibraltar. Indeed, the instructions issued to this minister by his Government, while exceedingly simple, might well embarrass the most finished diplomat of Europe. A French consul has formulated them with great accuracy as follows: "Reply to every demand made by the consuls with promises; postpone the fulfilment of these promises to the very last possible moment; gain time; throw every sort of difficulty in the way of the complainants; act so that, weary of making demands, they will desist. If, however, they begin to threaten, yield, but just as little as possible; if they then begin to load their guns, yield entirely, but not until the supreme moment arrives." It should be added, however, that since the war with Spain, and particularly during the reign of Mulai-el-Hassan, things have changed greatly.

We ascended to the kasbah, where the ministerial residence is situated. Two lines of soldiers formed wings on either side of the entrance. Crossing a

garden, we entered a spacious apartment, where the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Governor of Tangier advanced to meet the chargé d'affaires. At the back of the room was an alcove containing some chairs and a sofa; in one corner stood a very unpretending bed, under the bed a coffee service; the walls were white and bare, and the floor covered with mats. We took our seats in the alcove, and regarded the two personages confronting us, who offered an admirable contrast to one another. One, Sidi-Bargas, the minister, was a handsome old man, with a white beard, fresh, clear complexion, a pair of indescribably vivacious eyes, and a wide, smiling mouth, lined with two rows of big teeth as white as ivory; a countenance that gave indications at the first glance of that astuteness, that marvellously pliable nature, which is an absolute requisite of the office he held. The eye-glasses and snuff-box, and certain ceremonious movements of the head and hands lent him almost the air of a European diplomat. We had before us a man accustomed to associate with Christians—superior, perhaps, to many of the superstitions and prejudices of his countrymen—a liberal-minded Mussulman, a Moor wearing a varnish of civilization. The other, Kaïd Misfiui appeared to be the very personification of Morocco. He was a man of about fifty, dark, black-bearded, muscular, gloomy, taciturn, who sat with unsmiling face, bent head, eyes fixed upon the ground, and lowering brow, as though we inspired

him with the deepest repugnance. I observed him out of the corner of one eye with considerable distrust. He looked to me like a man who might only open his lips for the purpose of bringing someone's head rolling about his feet. They both wore large white turbans, and were wrapped from head to foot in diaphanous *caïks*.

The chargé d'affaires presented the commander and the captain by means of the interpreter. Both being officers, the introduction called for no especial comment; but when my turn came, some sort of explanation as to my calling was necessary, which the minister gave in exaggerated terms. Sidi-Bargas remained silent for some moments, and then addressed a few words to the interpreter, who translated them as follows: "His Excellency wishes to know why, since your lordship's hand is so gifted, it should be kept covered; your lordship should remove the glove so that the hand could be seen." This form of compliment was so novel that I was at a loss how to reply. "It is useless," observed the chargé d'affaires; "the talent lies in the head, not in the hand." It would have seemed as though there was nothing more to be said, but when a Moor once gets hold of a metaphor he does not let it go so easily. "That is quite true," replied His Excellency, "but the hand is the tool, and also the symbol of the gift of the mind." And so the discussion was carried on for some moments longer. "It is the gift of Allah," concluded Sidi-Bargas at

last. "Miserly Allah," said I to myself. The conversation now turned upon the coming journey. There were long lists of names of governors, provinces, rivers, valleys, mountains and plains which we were to meet with on our route, names which resounded in my ears like so many promises of wonderful things to come, and set my imagination on fire. What could the Red Mountain be? What would we see on the banks of the river of Pearls? What sort of governor must he be who bore the name of "Son of the Mare?" Our chargé asked a great many questions regarding the distances, water and shade, all of which information Sidi-Bargas had at his finger-ends, and it must be admitted that in this respect at least he is superior to Viscount Venosta, who would certainly not be able to tell a foreign ambassador the number of springs and groups of trees to be found on the road from Naples to Rome. Finally, he wished us a safe journey, with the formula, "Peace be upon your road," and accompanied the chargé to the door, shaking us all by the hand, with every appearance of cordial good-will. Kaïd Misfiui, still perfectly silent, extended the tips of his fingers without looking up. "Oh, it is my hand, is it, and not my head?" said I to myself, as I stretched out my own. We had gotten out of the room when the minister overtook us. "What day do you start?" he inquired of Comm. Scovasso. "Sunday," was the reply. "Make it Monday," said Sidi-Bargas earnestly. The chargé

asked why. "Because," said he, with perfect gravity, "it is a lucky day," and bowing to us once more he disappeared. I was told afterwards that Sidi-Misfiui has the reputation among the Moors of being a great scholar. He was tutor to the reigning Sultan, and is, as anyone can see by looking at his face, a fanatical Mussulman. Sidi-Bargas enjoys the more amiable distinction of being a great chess-player.

Three days prior to the date of our departure the street leading to the legation was already blocked with crowds of curious people. Ten large camels, who were to carry a part of the provision of wine on before us to Fez, came one after another, and kneeling before the door, received their load and started off at last, accompanied by a small body of soldiers and servants. In-doors the bustle and confusion during those three days redoubled. To the servants and soldiers already attached to the legation were added those sent from Fez. Stores kept arriving at all hours; the place was like a workshop, a storehouse, or the hold of a ship. For a little while it looked as though the preparations would not be completed in time, but by Sunday evening, the third of May, everything was in readiness, including the lofty staff of an enormous tri-colored flag, destined to float in the midst of the tents. All the personal baggage was to be loaded on the mules during the night and dispatched early in the morning, many hours in advance of the rest of the party, so that on reaching the ap-

pointed spot at night we might find everything prepared.

I shall always remember, with sensations of keen delight, those last moments which we spent in the court-yard of the legation just before setting out. We were all there, only the day before our party had been augmented by the arrival of an old friend of the chargé d'affaires—Signor Patxot, formerly Spanish Minister at Tangier, and Signor Morteo, a Genoese, the Italian consular agent at Mazagan. There was the doctor of the Caravan, Miguerez, a native of Algeria; a wealthy Moor named Mohammed-Ducali, an Italian subject, who accompanied the expedition in the character of accountant; the second legation dragoman, Salomone Aflalo; two Italian seamen, one of them Comm. Cassone's orderly, and the other a caulker on board the *Dora;* the legation soldiers in full gala costume; the cooks, workmen and servants, a crowd of unknown individuals, with whom two or three months' intercourse, in the interior of Morocco, would assuredly render me very familiar, and with whom I determined to scrape acquaintance one by one, beginning immediately, in order to make them talk and act in the book which was already taking shape in my head. Each one had some peculiarity of dress which contributed towards lending the entire assemblage a marvellously picturesque appearance. There were plumed hats, white cloaks, flowing mantles, veils, saddle-bags, field-blankets of

Söh. & Karco, Tangier.

strange colors; and what with the field-glasses, pistols, barometers, sketch-books and portfolios, we had enough material to fit out a bazaar. It looked as though we were about setting out for the Cape of Good Hope. Every one was in a tremor of excitement, curiosity and delight; and, to crown all, the weather was superb, with a delicious sea-breeze blowing. Evidently Mohammed was with Italy! At precisely five o'clock the minister mounted his horse, and at the same moment every legation ran up its flag by way of salutation. Preoccupied as I was by the beast I bestrode, and in the uproar of departure, I preserved only a confused impression of crowds of people blocking up the streets, handsome Jewesses standing on the balconies, and an Arab boy who, as we issued from the Sôk gate, shouted with a foreign accent, "Italia!"

At the Sôk we were joined by representatives of all the other legations, who, according to custom, were to accompany us some miles out of Tangier. Taking the Fez road, we fell into a long, noisy, confused cavalcade, before which floated the green flag of the Prophet.

HADD-EL-GHARBIA.

HADD-EL-GHARBIA.

It was a crowd composed of ministers, consuls, dragomans, secretaries, and clerks—a great international embassy representing six monarchies and two republics, and consisting, for the most part, of persons who had travelled over half the world. Among others there was the Spanish consul, attired in the charming costume of the province of Murcia, with a dagger thrust in his belt; the gigantic form of the United States consul, a former cavalry colonel, who stood a head and shoulders above the rest of the company and rode a fine Arabian charger, harnessed in the Mexican fashion; the dragoman of the French legation, a man of athletic build, mounted on an enormous white horse, who in certain positions seemed to take on the heavy, fantastic outlines of a centaur; English faces, Portuguese, Andalusian, German. Everyone was talking, the conversation being carried on in ten different languages, and accompanied by bursts of laughter, the humming of tunes, and neighing of horses. In front rode the standard-bearer, followed by two soldiers of the Italian legation; behind came the cavalry escort, headed by the

mulatto general, carrying their guns erect on their saddles; on either side were a throng of Arab servants on foot. This great company, gilded by the last rays of the setting sun, presented an aspect so gloriously picturesque that every one of us showed plainly in his face the satisfaction he felt at making at least one figure in the tableau. One by one almost all of those who had started with us had said farewell and turned back towards Tangier; only Spain and the United States were left. Thus far the road had not been very bad, and my mule being apparently the most docile beast in the empire there seemed to be nothing left to desire. But absolute happiness does not exist in this world, and accordingly the captain presently joined me with an unwelcome piece of news. The vice-consul, Paolo Grande, who was to share our tent, was, it appeared, a somnambulist. The captain had encountered him himself only the preceding night on the stairs of the legation, wrapped in a sheet, and carrying a light in one hand and a pistol in the other. On being questioned, the servants had confirmed what he had seen. To sleep in the same tent with him might be dangerous, and the captain begged me, as being rather more intimate with him than the others, to try to induce him to place his fire-arms in some one else's care at night. I promised to do my best. "I trust to you, then," said he, moving off, "and the commander does, as well. It seems to be a question of

preserving our skins." "This *is* unnecessary," thought I, and starting off in search of the vice-consul, I presently came across him looking for me. By dint of much questioning I succeeded in finding out that between fire-arms and cold steel he had with him a whole small arsenal, including a great Moorish dagger. This last he described to me at length, and I somehow got an impression that it had been manufactured and put on the market for the sole end and object of ripping open my heart. But how on earth was I to make him understand the situation, especially if he were entirely unconscious of it himself? I finally decided to wait until night, when we should all be getting ready for bed; but during the rest of the ride I could not rid myself of the disturbing thought.

We were travelling through a gently-rolling country, amid green, deserted fields. The road, if indeed it could be called a road, was cut up into a number of parallel paths, sunk like the beds of streams, which wound in and out among stones and bushes, sometimes crossing and interlacing with one another. Palms and aloes were occasionally outlined darkly against the golden horizon; the sky began to glitter with stars; no one was to be seen far or near. At one place the report of muskets was heard coming from a group of Arabs, who, stationed on a neighboring hill-top, were saluting the embassy as it passed. We had been riding now for three hours; it had be-

come quite dark, and everyone began to wish for the camp. Owing to hunger in some cases and to fatigue in others, conversation had gradually died out. Nothing could be heard but the tramp of the horses' hoofs and the loud breathing of the servants as they ran behind us. All at once a cry was heard from the Kaïd, and turning, we descried an eminence on our right all sparkling with lights. It was our first encampment, and we hailed it with shouts. I cannot express the delight I experienced on setting foot for the first time among those tents. Had it not been that I realized the duty that devolved upon me of upholding the dignity of Italian literature I should certainly have begun cutting capers. It was a little city —light, populous, noisy. On all sides arose the smoke of the kitchens; servants, soldiers, cooks, sailors came and went, interchanging questions and orders in all the tongues of the Tower of Babel. The tents were pitched in a large circle, in the midst of which was planted the flag of Italy. Outside this circle rows of horses and mules were tethered. The escort had its own small camp apart. Everything was arranged in military fashion. I recognized my own abode at once, and hastened to take possession. There were four camp-beds, mats, rugs, lanterns, candles, small tables, camp stools, wash-stands with legs striped in the Italian tri-color, and an enormous Indian fan—a princely establishment, in which one might willingly live a year. Our tent stood between

the minister's on the one hand and the artist's on the other. An hour after our arrival we seated ourselves at table in the large tent dedicated to Lucullus. I think that must have been the gayest dinner ever eaten within the confines of Morocco from the time Fez was founded. We were sixteen, including the American consul, his two sons, and the Spanish consul, with his two attachés. The Italian cuisine achieved a signal triumph. It was, I believe, the very first occasion on which, in the midst of that lonely country, there arose to Allah the odor of macaroni au joux and risotto à la Milanese. The author of these masterpieces, a fat French cook, who had come out from Tangier for that night only, was clamorously summoned to receive the honors of the proscenium. Toasts exploded like rockets—in Italian, in Spanish, in prose, in poetry, and set to music. The Spanish consul, a handsome Castilian of the old-fashioned type,—big beard, big chest and big heart, —declaimed, with one hand resting on the handle of his dagger, the dialogue between Don Juan Tenorio and Don Luis Mendia in the celebrated drama of José Zorilla. The Eastern question was discussed, the eyes of the Arab women, the Carlist war, the immortality of the soul, the attributes of the terrible *cobra capello*, Cleopatra's asp, which Morocco conjurers allow to bite them freely. Someone whispered in my ear that he would be eternally grateful if I would casually mention in my forthcoming book that he had

cut a lion in two, whereupon I seized the opportunity to beg that each one of the company would furnish me with a complete list of the wild animals he wished to figure as having slaughtered, and the Spanish consul, by way of grateful acknowledgment, composed then and there a Castilian stanza in honor of my mule, singing which in chorus, to the tune of *Italiana in Algeri*, we trooped out of the tent to go to bed. The camp was buried in profound silence. Before the tent of the minister, who had retired earlier, watched the faithful Selam, head of the legation soldiers, while in the distance a white, spectre-like figure—the Kaïd of the escort—could be seen slowly pacing back and forth. The sky was glittering with stars; how perfect it all would have been except for that somnambulistic thorn! As we entered the tent the captain repeated his request, and I made up my mind, since the thing had to be done, to broach the subject so soon as we should all be safely in bed, but the prospect was anything but an agreeable one. Suppose the vice-consul should not take it in good part; I would be inconsolable, he was such a charming companion. A pure-blooded, fiery Sicilian, he talked on the most trifling subjects with the ardor and emphasis of an inspired preacher, employing such adjectives as terrible, immense, divine, at every statement. His mildest gesture was to wave both arms over his head. To see him discuss anything, with those eyes starting out of his head, and that aquiline nose, which looked

as though it were trying to hook his adversary, anyone would naturally have supposed him to be irascible and overbearing to a degree; instead of which he was the kindest, most sweet-tempered young fellow one could well imagine.

"Courage," murmured the captain, when we were all four in bed.

"Signor Grande," I began, "are you at all in the habit of walking about in your sleep?"

He seemed much surprised at my question.

"No," he replied; "and what is more, I should not like it at all if anyone else were."

"Very odd," thought I. "Then," I resumed, "you admit that the habit is a dangerous one for other people?"

He stared at me. "I beg your pardon" he said, after a moment, "but I really hardly think that this is a subject for you to joke about."

"I beg *your* pardon," said I, somewhat nettled, "but I can assure you that nothing is further from my intention at the present moment than joking, as it is not my custom to joke about serious matters."

"It is indeed a serious matter," said he, "and I think it is your place to guard against its becoming more so."

"This is really refreshing," cried I. "Do you expect me, then, to go out and sleep in the fields?"

"Well, it seems to me that if anyone is to go it should be you rather than me."

"Why, this is actually insulting," said I, bounding into a sitting position on the side of my bed.

"Oh, we are to understand, then," shouted the vice-consul, leaping up in his turn, "that it is an insult not to allow one's self to be murdered!"

An explosion of laughter from the captain and the commander here cut short the discussion, and before they were able to speak we understood that we had both been victims of a practical joke, the vice-consul having been made to believe that I had been seen wandering about the legation at night arrayed in a sheet and carrying a pistol. The night passed without further incident, and by sunrise I was up and out.

The European camp was still buried in slumber, but over among the tents of the escort there seemed to be a slight stir. All the eastern sky was tinted rose-color. Advancing to the centre of the camp I stood for some time gazing at the scene before me. The tents were pitched on a grassy hill-side, dotted over with Indian figs, aloes and flowering shrubs; hard by that of the minister there arose a lofty palm-tree, leaning gracefully towards the east; away from the hill stretched a wide flowery plain, bounded in the distance by a line of deep green hills, beyond which others could be seen, blue and almost melting into the limpid sky. In all that broad expanse not a single house, or herd, or tent, or cloud of smoke was to be seen. It was an immense garden, from

which every living thing had apparently been expelled. A light perfumed breeze stirred the leaves of the palm-tree—no other sound disturbed the absolute quiet. Turning suddenly at length, I found ten staring eyes fixed upon me, belonging to five Arabs seated on a mass of rock a short distance off—peasants who had come during the night from who knows where to see the camp. There they sat like figures hewn out of the stone beneath them, gazing stolidly at me without so much as winking, and giving not the slightest indication of curiosity, or pleasure, or ill-will, or embarrassment, all five of them immovable and impassive, their faces half-hidden under their hoods, looking like the very impersonation of the solitude and silence of the desert. I put one hand in my pocket, the ten eyes followed the movement; I drew out a cigar, the eyes instantly fastened upon it; I walked forward, turned back, stooped to pick up a stone, those ten eyes never left me; nor were they, I soon discovered, the only ones. Little by little I discerned a couple here, a group there, seated about in the grass, enveloped as well in hooded capes, and equally immovable, their eyes fixed upon me. They looked like people risen out of the ground—corpses with wide-staring eyes, apparitions rather than actual persons, who might vanish at the first rays of the sun. A long tremulous cry from the escort camp presently distracted my attention. It was a Mussulman soldier announcing the prayer-hour to his companions—the

first of the five canonical hours at which every Mussulman must daily say his prayers. Some soldiers came out of the camp, and, spreading their cloaks on the ground, knelt down with faces turned towards the east. First rubbing their heads, hands, arms and feet with a handful of dirt, they began reciting their prayers in low tones, kneeling, rising to their feet, prostrating themselves face down on the grass, raising their open hands to their ears, and squatting on their heels. The commander of the escort came out of his tent, then the servants, then the cooks, till in a few moments the greater part of the population of the camp was on foot. The sun, hardly yet well above the horizon, was already blazing hot.

Re-entering my tent, I made the acquaintance of several oddities whom I will have occasion to mention more or less frequently in the course of this narrative. The first to appear was one of the two Italian seamen—the commander's orderly—a Sicilian, born at Porto Empedocle, named Ranni. He was a young man of five-and-twenty, tall and strong as Hercules, of excellent character, grave as a judge, and possessing the singular characteristic of never being surprised at anything, finding everything perfectly natural, like *Gol* in the *Cinque settimane in pallone*, astonished only at the astonishment of others. To him Porto Empedocle, Gibraltar, Africa, China—where he had been—the moon itself, had it been brought to him, were all precisely alike.

"Well, what do you say to this life?" asked the commander, as he helped him to dress.

"What would you have me say?" was the reply.

"Why, the journey, the strange country, all this confusion, has it made no impression upon you at all?"

The orderly thought about it a little while, and then answered, quite simply, "No, no impression at all."

"None? But the camp, at least that is an entirely new experience for you?"

"No, Signor Commandante, it is not."

"Why, when did you ever see such a thing before?"

"I saw it last night."

The commander looked at him a moment. "Well, last night, then," said he, beginning to grow a little testy. "What impression did the camp make upon you last night?"

"Why," replied the worthy man, frankly, "you see it made—well, just the same impression on me that it did this morning."

The commander bowed his head in an attitude of resignation.

Presently there appeared another personage quite as curious in his way. This was an Arab of Tangier whom the vice-consul had hired for the journey. His name was Ciua, but his master called him Civa, as being more easily pronounced. He was a big, fat youth, very silly, but good, and anxious to do

right; a great, simple child, who usually laughed and hid his face when he found any one looking at him. His clothing consisted of a single long, full, white tunic, which floated off behind as he walked in the most ridiculous fashion, making him look like a caricature of a cherub. He knew about thirty words in Spanish, and with these he managed to make himself understood when he was obliged to talk, but with his master he usually employed only signs. From his appearance I took him to be about twenty-five, but it is easy to make mistakes in judging of an Arab's age, so I asked him. First he covered his face with one hand, then reflected for some moments, and finally answered, "*Cuando guerra España—año y medio;*" that is, at the time of the Spanish war—a year and a half. As the war with Spain was in 1860, it would make him seventeen.

"What a tremendous fellow for his age," said the vice-consul.

"Huge," I replied.

The next person was the ambassador's cook, who brought us our coffee. He was a pure Piedmontese, "cut out of a single block," a pillar of the gateway of the Piazza Castello, who had come straight from Turin, which he called "the garden of Italy," to Tangier only a few days before, and had not yet recovered himself. The poor man could say nothing but "What a country! what a country!" I asked him if, before he left Turin, they had not told him

Zobolini a Cimici

what sort of a place Morocco was, and what kind of city Tangier. He answered yes; they had said to him, "Now, remember, Tangier is not Turin; it will not be like Turin at all;" and he had said to himself, "Patience, it will be like Genoa, then, or Alessandria," and, instead, it had been a city like that, in the midst of savages, and they had given him two Arabs to help him who could not understand a single word of Piedmontese. "Oh, poor me!" and, in addition to everything else, they were to take a two-months' journey across the *Egyptian desert!* He prophesied that we would never get back alive. "But at least," said I, "if you do get back to Turin you will have a great deal to tell about." "Ah," he replied, in a mournful tone, as he went off, "what is there to say about a country where you cannot find so much as a couple of leaves of salad!"

Breakfast over, the ambassador gave the order to break camp. During this lengthy operation, upon which nearly a hundred persons were engaged, I had leisure to observe a very striking trait in the Arab character—the passion, that is, for command. No outward badge was needed for one to recognize at a glance, amid all that crowd and confusion, the head muleteer, the head porter, the head of the tent-servants, the head of the legation soldiers. Whoever was invested with any authority over his fellows let it be seen and heard in and out of season with voice and hands and eyes, and all his powers of mind and

body, while those who really had no authority seized upon the most trifling pretexts to give orders to their equals, deluding themselves with a pretence of being a little above the others. The raggedest servant among them was made blissfully happy if for one moment he could assume an imperious attitude. The simplest operation, such as tying a rope or lifting a box, called for an interchange of deafening cries, fiery looks, the gestures of a haughty sultan. Even Civo, modest, unassuming Civo, was very high-handed with two inoffensive country Arabs who had taken the liberty of looking, from quite a distance, at his master's trunks.

At ten o'clock, beneath a burning sun, the long caravan began slowly to descend into the plain. The Spanish consul and his two companions had left us at daybreak; the only persons now remaining beside the members of the embassy were the American consul and his sons. From the spot where we had passed the night, called by the Arabs "Ain-Dalia"—fountain of wine, from the grape-vines which once grew there—we were to travel that day to Hadd-el-Gharbia, beyond the mountains which inclose the plain. For more than an hour we journeyed over slightly undulating ground, between fields of barley and millet, by winding paths, which occasionally crossed and recrossed one another, forming small islands of rank grass and tall flowers. No one was to be seen either in the fields or on the road, except at the end of the

first half-hour, when we encountered a long train of camels led by two Bedouins, who accosted us as they passed with the usual greeting, "Peace be upon your road." It was very painful to me to see those poor Arab servants, running along-side of us on foot, laden with umbrellas, wraps, glasses, portfolios—contrivances of whose very names and uses they were ignorant—obliged to keep up on a run with the rapid pace of our mules, choked with dust, scorched by the sun, ill-fed, half-naked, at everyone's beck and call, not owning a thing in the world but a rag of a tunic and a pair of old shoes, having come on foot from Fez to Tangier only to return on foot from Tangier to Fez, and then, who knows? Start off with another caravan to go from Fez to Morocco, and so on, for the rest of their lives, and all in order not to die of hunger, and to be allowed the privilege of resting their bones at night beneath a tent. I thought as I looked at them of Goethe's "piramide della esistenza." There was a mulatto boy among them, about thirteen or fourteen years old, good-looking and extremely active, who fixed now on me, now on other members of the party, his two big black eyes, beaming over with curiosity and interest, in which a thousand unspoken questions could be read. He was a foundling, the fruit of who can say what strange union, and was embarking with the Italian caravan on that exhausting career which he would in all probability only quit to drop into the grave. Another, an old man all skin

and bone, ran with his head down, closed eyes and clinched fists and the desperate resignation of a condemned man. Others talked and laughed in gasps. Suddenly one detached himself from the others, shot ahead, and passing everyone disappeared. Ten minutes later we came upon him seated in the shade of a fig-tree; he had made a half-mile dash in order to gain five minutes on the caravan, and rest himself in the shade.

Meanwhile we had reached the foot of a small mountain, called in Arabic the Red Mountain, from the color of the soil—rough, precipitous and covered with the tangled shoots of a forest which had been cut down. This ascent had been described to us all the way from Tangier as being the most perilous one of the journey. "Mule of mine," I murmured, "to your care I confide my contract with my publishers," and so saying I urged him forward, with my mind fully prepared for a head-over-heels tumble. The path wound up amid great rocks, apparently sharpened and pointed by my personal enemy with an express view to leaving their impressions upon the hinder-parts of my person. At every uncertain movement of the mule I could feel one of the chapters of my future book tumble out of my head. Twice the poor beast, falling on his knees, landed my soul on the confines of a better world, but finally I succeeded in reaching the top safe and sound, where, to my great surprise, I found I had left all the others be-

hind, the two painters only excepted, they having pushed on ahead so as to get a view from above of the caravan in movement. And, indeed, the spectacle was well worth a forced march. It extended from half-way up the side of the mountain for more than a mile into the plain below. First came the embassy party, conspicuous in which were the ambassador's plumed hat and Muhammed Ducai's white turban, and on either side of and behind them a crowd of servants, mounted and on foot, scattered picturesquely about among the rocks and bushes of the hill-side. Behind these came, in couples or groups or in single file, wrapped in their white and blue cloaks, and bowed low over their scarlet saddles, the horsemen of the escort, looking like a procession of masquers, and behind the escort the interminable line of mules and horses, laden with tents, boxes, furniture, kitchen utensils and provisions, flanked by soldiers and servants, the last of whom were little more than white and red specks in the green distance of the plain. One would hardly believe how that variegated, armed, glittering company animated the solitary valley. What a strange and at the same time festive scene it presented! Had I at that moment possessed the power to turn them all into stone, in order to study them at my ease, I should never have been able to resist the temptation. Turning away at length to resume the journey, I had another surprise. There, but a few miles away, lay the Atlantic, its surface as

blue and unruffled as a lake. One ship only was in sight, sailing very near the coast in the direction of the strait. The commander, by using his glass, made out that she was an Italian vessel. What would we not have given to have been seen and recognized in turn! From the Red Mountain we descended into another charming valley, all covered with wild flowers, which formed, as it were, a carpet of red, lilac and white. Not a horse, not a tent, not a human being anywhere to be seen. The ambassador deciding to call a halt, we all dismounted and seated ourselves in the shade of a group of trees, while the baggage-train pursued its way. Around us, a little distance off, sat the servants, each one holding in his hand the bridle of a horse or mule. The two painters drew out their books to make a few sketches, but they had their trouble for their pains, for no sooner did one of those shirtless ones discover that he was being observed than he promptly turned his back, or hid behind a tree, or drew his hood down over his eyes. Three, one after another, arose and went grumbling off, leading their beasts to some spot fifty feet farther away. They did not even want to have the animals drawn. He who missed seeing Signor Biseo on that occasion has never been face to face with Wrath. He did everything in his power to induce them to sit still—imploring, laughing at and offering them money. Wasted breath. They replied by a negative motion of the hand, pointing to the sky and smiling cun-

Mountain and Valley in the Interior.

ningly, as much as to say, "We are not quite such fools as that." Not even the mulatto boy, not even the legation soldiers, brought up, one might say, among Europeans, and already on quite familiar terms with the two artists, were willing to allow their images to be profaned by a Christian pencil. The Koran, as everyone knows, forbids the representation of the human figure, and of animals as well, as being a principle of, or temptation to, idolatry. Signor Bisco got the interpreter to ask one of the soldiers what reason he had for refusing to allow himself to be drawn. "It is because," he replied, "in that figure which he wishes to make, the artist is unable to instil the soul; to what end then would he do it? God alone can create a living being, and it is sacrilege to attempt to imitate His work." The mulatto boy was next interrogated as to his reasons. "Draw my portrait," said he, laughing, "while I am asleep, if you choose, it makes no difference to me, it will not be my fault; but when I can see you do it—never in the world." Whereupon Bisco set to work to sketch one of them who lay fast asleep, while his companions stood in groups a little apart, gazing with big, wondering eyes, now at the artist, now at the sleeper. All at once the man awoke, looked around, understood what was going on, and, getting up, walked off with a gesture of annoyance, amid the laughter of the others, who had the air of saying, "He has done you, you are ruined now."

Resuming our journey, an hour's ride brought us to where the tents of the camp could be seen gleaming on the horizon. A troop of horse, appearing from I know not where, bore down rapidly upon us, the riders shouting and discharging their guns. Halting about ten feet away, the leader advanced and shook hands with the ambassador, and they all then fell in with the escort. They were cavalry of the district where our tents were pitched, soldiers belonging to a sort of *landwehr*, which forms the principal part of the Moroccoan army (if indeed the military forces of Morocco can properly be termed an army), and is composed of all males trained to bear arms from the age of sixteen to sixty. Some of these men wore turbans, others had red handkerchiefs knotted at the back of their heads, and all were attired in white caftans When we reached the camp they were just erecting the last tents. The spot chosen this time was a stretch of arid, undulating ground; on one side could be seen in the far distance a range of blue mountains, on the other a chain of green hills. About half a mile from the tents were two groups of thatched huts, half-hidden among Indian fig-trees. We all assembled in one of the tents, and hardly were we well seated when a member of the legation guard came running up, and halting in front of the ambassador announced, in delighted tones, "The *mona!*" "Let them bring it," said the ambassador, rising. Every one followed his example, and presently a long

train of Arabs, accompanied by the commander of the escort, the legation guard, and all the servants, was seen advancing through the camp, and drawing up in line before the tent they proceeded to lay at the minister's feet a quantity of charcoal, eggs, sugar, butter, candles and bread, together with three dozen chickens and eight sheep. This was the *mona*, a tribute which the country people, in addition to the heavy taxes they have to pay in money, are obliged to furnish to all official personages, the Sultan's soldiers, and the embassies which pass through their region of country. The Government fixes the amount of provisions to be paid, but as the local authorities assess the people at their own pleasure, it follows that the quantity of stuff actually received by those for whom it is intended, although always more than is really needed, is only a small part of what was extorted a month before or will possibly be extorted a month after the day of presentation.

An old man, apparently the chief of the customs, addressed, by means of the interpreter, some obsequious words to the ambassador; the others, all of them poor country-folk, clad for the most part in rags, gazed helplessly from us to the tents, and then at their property, the fruit of their toil and sweat, with a melancholy wonder expressive only of profound resignation. A rapid distribution of the provisions followed, the ambassador's table, the legation soldiers, the escort and muleteers being supplied in

turn. Signor Morteo, who only that day had been appointed general intendant of the camp, handed a gratuity to the old Arab, and he making a sign to the others, they all turned away in silence and took their way back to their huts. A tremendous row then ensued—and the same thing may be said of every other similar occasion throughout the journey—anent the re-distribution of the *mona* among the individual soldiers, servants and muleteers. It was a most amusing scene. Two or three men marched excitedly up and down the camp carrying a sheep in their arms and loudly invoking Allah and the ambassador; others shouted their claims vociferously, pounding on the ground with their fists; Civa waved his white tunic about here and there in the profound conviction that he was very terrible. The sheep bleated, the chickens got loose, the dogs howled—suddenly the ambassador rose to his feet, and there was instant silence, only Selam continued to grumble for some moments longer.

Selam, be it known, was a very great personage. There were really two members of the legation guard who bore that name, and they were both in personal attendance upon the ambassador; but just as, when one says Napoleon, without any addition to the name, every one knows that Napoleon I. is meant, so when any of us during the journey spoke of Selam, he was at once understood to refer to one Selam in particular. How plainly he rises before me now as I write; he,

the bridegroom Mohammed and the Emperor were to my mind the three most attractive personalities I encountered in Morocco. Selam was a strong, handsome, active young man with a very quick mind; he took everything in at a glance, did everything in a hurry, walked in bounds, talked by looks, and was in motion from morning to night. Every one appealed to him about the baggage, tents, cooking, horses. He spoke Spanish fairly well, and knew a few words of Italian, but he could make himself perfectly well understood by employing only Arabic, so speaking and picturesque were his gestures. To give the idea of a hill he made such a motion as one might expect from some fiery colonel pointing out to his men a height to be charged; when he scolded one of the servants he threw himself on him as though about to annihilate him; he constantly reminded me of Tomaso Salvini in the parts of Orosmane and Othello. In whatever occupation he might be engaged, whether pouring cold water down the ambassador's back or flying by on a gallop mounted on his chestnut horse, he always presented a fine and dashing appearance, and the two artists were never tired of watching him. He always wore a scarlet caftan and light-blue trousers, and could be distinguished at a glance from one end of the caravan to the other, while throughout the camp you heard his name being continually called in all directions. He ran about from one tent to another joking with us, shouting at the servants, giving and

receiving orders, quarrelling, scolding, and bursting into laughter. When he was angry he looked like a savage, when he laughed he was like a child. In the course of every dozen words that he uttered you could hear "*el señor ministro.*" For him the minister ranked next after Allah and the Prophet; ten guns levelled at his breast would not have made him change color, while at an undeserved reproof from the ambassador he would weep like a child; his age was twenty-five.

When he had finished grumbling he came over to where I was and began opening a box. As he leaned over, his fez fell off and I noticed some drops of blood on his clean-shaven head. On asking what they meant I was informed in an off-hand manner that he had hurt himself with one of the big *mona* sugar-loaves. "I threw it up in the air," said he, "and let it come down on my head." As I looked a little puzzled, he proceeded to explain. "I do it so as to harden my head; at first I used to drop to the ground half dead, but now I only lose a few drops of blood; in time I will not so much as crack the skin. All the Arabs do that; my father could break bricks nearly two fingers thick on his skull as easily as I could a crust of bread. A true Arab boy," he concluded, proudly, at the same time pounding his crown with his clinched fist, "should have a head like iron."

That evening the camp presented a totally different aspect from that of the night before. Every

one had settled down into regular habits. The two artists, their easels set up in front of their tent, were hard at work painting; the captain had gone to take a look at the lay of the land; the vice-consul to catch insects; the ex-minister of Spain to hunt partridges; the ambassador and the commander were playing chess in the mess-tent; the servants were jumping over one another's backs, placing their hands on each other's shoulders; the soldiers of the escort sat in a circle talking; others walked up and down, read, wrote; it was as though we had been camping a month, and had there only been a small printing-press at hand I should have been tempted to start a daily paper. The weather was superb, we dined with the tent-doors open, and throughout the meal the Hadd-el-Gharbia cavalry saluted the ambassador with noisy volleys from their muskets, while a magnificent sunset lighted up the scene.

The seat next to mine at table was occupied by Mohammed Ducali, and I had a chance for the first time to observe him attentively. He was the veritable type of a wealthy Moor; effeminate, elegant, obsequious, and, as I said, wealthy, since he was reputed to own more than thirty houses in Tangier, although just at that time his affairs were somewhat embarrassed. He might have been about forty years old; was tall and fair, with regular features and a beard; on his head he wore a small turban, around which was wound a *caïk* of the finest Fez gauze,

which fell in folds over an embroidered purple cloth caftan; he smiled so as to show his teeth, spoke Spanish in a womanish voice, struck attitudes, and had the air and manner of a languid lover. He had been a merchant formerly, and had visited Italy, Spain, London and Paris, returning at last to Morocco thoroughly imbued with European ideas and habits; he drank wine, smoked cigarettes, wore stockings, read novels, and talked about his love affairs. The principal cause that was taking him to Fez was a claim he had against the Government, and which he hoped, through the good offices of the ambassador, to succeed in collecting. He had brought his own tents, servants, and mules, and from the look in his eyes would no doubt have liked to bring his women as well, had such a thing been possible, but upon this topic he observed the strictest reserve; the women of whom he spoke in recounting his adventures were all Europeans; the harem was for him, too, a sacred subject. I ventured one single question, couched in vague terms; he looked at me, smiled modestly, and made no reply.

After dinner, determined to gratify a strong desire I had cherished ever since setting out from Tangier, I made a nocturnal excursion through the camp, and it proved to be one of the most entertaining experiences I had on the entire trip. Waiting until every one had gone to their tents, I wrapped myself in a white cloak belonging to the commander and sallied forth in search of adventures.

The sky was covered with stars; all the lanterns, with the single exception of the one swinging from the top of the flag-staff, had gone out; throughout the entire camp there reigned the most profound silence. Very softly, and taking good care to avoid stumbling over the tent-ropes, I turned to the left, and had not gone half a dozen steps before an unexpected noise attracted my attention. I stopped; it sounded like the notes of a guitar issuing from a closed tent, which I had never observed before, pitched between that of the ambassador and our own, but about thirty feet beyond the circle of the camp. Drawing near, I listened. The guitar was accompanying a thin, sweet voice which was singing an Arab song full of dreamy melancholy. To whom did this mysterious tent belong—could it be possible that a woman was inside? I walked all around, but it was closed on all sides; then I got down on the ground to look underneath. The stooping posture made me cough. Instantly the song ceased, and at the same moment a gentle voice close by me said, *Quien es?* (Who is it?) "Allah preserve me," thought I, "it *is* a woman." "One who is very curious," I answered aloud, throwing the most pathetic inflexion I could into my voice. A burst of laughter was the response, and a man's voice said in Spanish, "Good! Come in, then, and have a cup of tea." What a disappointment! It was Mohammed Ducali. However, I was more than consoled when, on pushing back the curtain, I found myself

in a beautiful tent hung with a rich flowered material ornamented with little arched windows, lighted by a Moorish lamp, and the air heavy with perfume; a fit abode, in short, in every respect to shelter the fairest of the Sultan's odalisques. Seated beside Ducali, who was stretched out voluptuously on a Rabat rug, his head pillowed on a rich cushion, was a young Arab of pleasing, thoughtful aspect, holding a guitar in his hand, upon which he had been accompanying himself; in the centre of the tent stood a handsome tea-service, and on one side smoke was rising from a perfume-burner. I explained to Ducali how I came to be prowling about his tent; he laughed, offered me a cup of tea, made his boy sing me something, and wished me a pleasant journey; then I stepped out again, the curtain dropped back in place, and I found myself once more in the silent, deserted camp. Making my way around another tent occupied by Ducali's servants, I proceeded towards that of the ambassador. Stretched in front of the door in his light-blue cape, with his sword lying close beside him, lay Selam. If I were to awaken him and he should fail to recognize me at once, thought I, he would knock me down; let us therefore proceed with caution; and drawing near on tiptoe I put my head in the tent. The interior was divided in two by a handsome curtain. The outer half, which served as a reception-room, was furnished with a small table on which lay writing materials, and some gilt arm-chairs; the inner half was used as a

sleeping-chamber by the ambassador and his friend, the ex-minister of Spain. Thinking that I would leave my visiting-card on the table I stepped lightly inside, but a growl from Diana, the ambassador's dog, arrested me, and almost at the same moment I heard her master's voice calling out, "Who is there?" "A cutthroat," murmured I. He recognized my voice at once. "Cut away," he said, and I forthwith explained the object of my visit, upon which he laughed heartily, and grasping my hand in the darkness wished me all success. As I went out my foot struck against a suspicious object. Lighting a match, I found it was a tortoise, while a little further off sat a huge toad, which seemed to be watching me; for a minute I thought I would abandon the expedition, but curiosity presently getting the better of me, I went on towards the intendant's tent. Just as I leaned over to listen, a tall white form rose up between me and it and a voice pronounced the word "asleep" in sepulchral accents. I jumped back as though I had seen a ghost, but recovered myself as I recognized Morteo's Arab servant, a man he had had in his employment for many years, and who had picked up a little Italian. Like Selam, he always slept outside his master's tent with a sword beside him. Notwithstanding my white cloak he had known me at the first glance. Wishing him good-night, I continued on my way. The next tent was occupied by the doctor and the dragoman Soliman; a strong smell of medicines an-

nounced the fact ten feet away; a light was still burning in it; the dragoman was asleep, but the doctor sat at a table reading. This young doctor, a cultivated man of most gentlemanly appearance and manners, had one curious thing about him: born in Algeria of French parentage, he had lived for many years in Italy and there married a Spanish wife; he consequently not only spoke the three languages with equal fluency, but seemed to partake of the national characteristics of all three countries, apparently feeling the same degree of patriotism for each; in short, he was a Latin, single and threefold, who was equally at home in Rome, Madrid, or Paris. He possessed a remarkably keen sense of humor; without uttering a word or endeavoring to attract any one's attention he would, with a glance or slight movement of the lips, turn a person or statement into ridicule in such a manner as to raise shouts of laughter. As soon as I appeared he guessed what I was after, offered me a drop of something to drink, and lifting his glass to his lips murmured, "To the success of the undertaking." "By Allah's help," I answered, and then left him in peace to his reading. Passing in front of the large mess-tent, now deserted, I turned to the left, and quitting the camp circle, threaded my way between two long lines of sleeping camels, and came out in the midst of the tents belonging to the escort. Here I paused to listen to the breathing of the sleeping soldiers. In front of the tents were heaps of guns,

swords, saddles, scarfs, daggers, caiks, and the flag of Mohammed, giving it the appearance of a battle-field. Looking out into the surrounding country, I could see no one in any direction; even the two groups of huts were barely discernible—merely two vague, dark spots in the landscape. I now turned back, and after passing between the American consul's tent and that of his servants—both closed and silent—crossed the small open space in front of the kitchens, surmounted a barricade of casks, earthenware pots, pans, and jugs, and finally reached the little tent where the cook and his two Arab scullions slept. I thrust my head inside; it was as black as pitch. "*Gioanin*," I said, calling the cook by name. The poor man, who was very unhappy over the failure of a dish of fritters, and very uneasy probably at the close vicinity of the two "savages," was still awake. "Is it you?" he asked. "Yes, it is I."

He paused a moment before making any reply, and then turning over on his bed with a groan, exclaimed, "Oh, what a country!" "Courage," said I. "Only think—in ten days you will be inside the walls of the great city of Fez!"

He muttered something, of which I could distinguish only the word "Moncalieri," after which I respected his grief and withdrew.

The next tent was occupied by the two sailors, Ranni, the commander's orderly, and Luigi, the caulker of the *Dora*, a young Neapolitan, bright,

active, and prepossessing, who in the course of two days had won every one's good-will. Their light was still burning, and they were hard at work eating. Pausing a moment, I caught part of a very amusing conversation. Luigi was asking for whom the pencil sketches the two artists were making were intended.

"The idea!" answered Ranni; "why, for the king, of course." "Just as they are, without any colors?" inquired the other. "Oh, no; when they get back to Italy they will color them first and then send them."

"Who knows how much they will get for them!"

"Oh, a great deal, *Magan;* a crown for each picture. A king does not care how much money he spends."

Fearing that I might be seen and suspected of wanting to spy, I was most reluctantly obliged to forego the rest of the conversation, and stole away on tiptoe.

Issuing once more from the camp inclosure, I took a turn through the long lines of horses and mules, recognizing among the latter, with tender emotion, my white travelling companion, who was apparently plunged in thought, and came next to the tent of Signor Vincent, a French resident of Tangier, one of those mysterious individuals who have travelled all over the world, talk all languages, and follow every trade—cook, merchant, hunter, interpreter, decipherer of ancient inscriptions; he had joined the Italian

embassy with his tent and his horses in the capacity of head overseer of the culinary department in order to get an opportunity to sell some French uniforms he had purchased in Algeria to the Governor of Fez. Peeping in through a crack, I saw him seated in an attitude of profound meditation upon a chest, a big pipe in his mouth, and the place lighted by a candle stuck in the neck of a bottle; a strange figure that reminded me of the old alchemists in Dutch paintings who sit in their workshops thinking, their faces illumined by the fire in their alembics. Bent, withered, bony, he looked as though each turn of fortune in his adventurous life had added a wrinkle to his face, a twist to his body. Who knows of what he may have been thinking! Who can tell what surging memories may have chased one another through his brain, of adventures, journeys, strange encounters, mad undertakings, and curious people? And yet all the time he may have been entirely preoccupied by the price of a pair of Turkish trousers or his scanty provision of tobacco. Just as I was on the point of speaking to him he suddenly blew out the light and was swallowed up by the darkness like some magician.

Hard by stood the tent of the commander of the escort, a little beyond it that of his first officer, and farther off still that of the chief of the Hadd-el-Gharbia cavalry. The last two were closed, the first open and empty, and I was pausing to look in

when I heard a light step close by, and at the same instant felt a grip of steel on my arm. Turning, I found myself face to face with the mulatto general. As soon as he saw who it was he let go, saying, with an apologetic laugh, "*Salamu alikum! Salamu alikum!*" (Peace be with you! Peace be with you!) He had mistaken me for a thief. I shook hands with him, by way of acknowledgment, and resumed my walk. After proceeding a little way I saw what appeared to be a man wrapped in a cloak and seated, gun in hand, at some distance from the camp. I at once concluded that he must be a sentinel; and sure enough, on looking farther, I made out another about fifty feet beyond the first, and then a third, and so on, till they formed a complete chain around the camp. This vigilance, as I was well aware, was not maintained from dread of an attack on the part of any band of assassins, but merely to protect the tents from the ordinary thieves of the surrounding country, adepts in stealing from the encampments of the Arab tribes. Luckily my fearless tread did not arouse any suspicions in the minds of the sentinels, and I was able to finish my excursion unmolested. Passing close by Malek and Saladino, the two fiery steeds belonging to the ambassador, and stumbling over some more tortoises, I reached the tent occupied by the foot-servants. They were all lying on one small heap of straw, with no covering over them, one on top of another, and buried in such profound

slumber that not even their breathing could be heard, like so many dead bodies piled up together. The boy with the big black eyes, for the excellent reason that he was the smallest, had been gradually pushed half out of the tent, and I came very near treading on his head. Feeling sorry for him, and wishing to give him a pleasant surprise, I placed a piece of money in his outstretched hand, which lay across the grass with the palm up, as though asking an alms of the spirit of the night. A cheerful murmur of voices issuing from a tent not far away next attracted my attention. It was the one assigned to the ambassador's servants and soldiers, and the inmates were apparently eating and drinking, as I detected the odor of kiff, and recognized the voices of the second Selam, of Abd-el-Rhaman, of Ali, Hamet, Maramù, and Civo. It was an Arab orgy in full swing; and indeed they had a perfect right to allow themselves some relaxation, poor young fellows, after having toiled the livelong day on foot, on horseback, in the tents, at table; being called in a hundred different directions at once, in a hundred different languages, for a hundred different things; so not wishing to interrupt their enjoyment, I stole cautiously away. Up to this moment my excursion had gone off wonderfully well, but it was destined not to end without one unfortunate incident.

I had not gone more than twenty feet beyond the soldiers' tent when I felt two strong hands grasp me

by the throat, while a voice choking with anger hissed some threatening words in my ear. Wrenching myself free, I faced about. . . . . Who was it? Why, the painter of the *Expulsion of the Duke of Athens*, of course—my good friend Ussi, enveloped like a spectre in his long white *abbaia*, which he brought from Egypt, just issuing forth to make the same round as mine, in an opposite direction. I was now in front of the artists' tent, having concluded the circle of the camp, my nocturnal trip was over, and I dived once more into my little canvas dwelling.

TLÁTA DE RAISANA.

TLÁTA DE RAISANA.

THE next morning we started off before sunrise in a thick fog that sent a chill to one's bones, and hid us from one another. The escort cavalry had pulled their hoods down over their eyes, and wrapped up their muskets; we were all enveloped in cloaks and overcoats; it was like autumn on one of the plains of the Low Countries. Behind me I could only distinguish a white turban and the light blue cloak belonging to the Kaïd, while the rest of the company were nothing but indistinct shadows fading away into the gray atmosphere. Sleepiness and the chill weather made every one very quiet, and we travelled in silence over an uneven country overgrown with dwarf palms, lentisks, broom, wild fennel, and thorns, sometimes riding close together in a solid body, and again scattering about in little groups, according to the endless windings and twistings of the paths. The sun appearing above the horizon shone for a few moments upon our left cheeks and then once more disappeared, but at the same instant the fog lifted sufficiently for us to see something of our surroundings. We were passing through a succession of

little green valleys, which we traversed almost without being conscious of them, so gentle were the inclines. The heights were covered with aloes and wild olive-trees; the latter attain here to great size, but are seldom cultivated by the natives, who use the fruit of the argan, both as an article of food and for burning-oil. As we left each valley behind we looked all about in search of a village, a group of huts, a few tents, but there was nothing of the kind in sight. It was like exploring a virgin country. Valley after valley, solitude after solitude, succeeded one another until, when we had ridden for nearly three hours, we finally reached a place where the closer groups of trees, wider paths, and presence of some droves of cattle announced the vicinity of an inhabited region. One after another a number of members of the escort now set spur to their horses and, rapidly passing us, disappeared over the brow of the next hill; others rode quickly off across the country in different directions; the remainder ranged themselves in order. In a few moments we found ourselves at the mouth of a gorge formed by low hills, on whose summits stood a few wretched thatched huts; some Arabs—men and women—watched us from behind the bushes. As we entered the gorge the sun burst forth, and when shortly afterwards we reached a point where the road made a sharp turn, almost at right angles, we were suddenly confronted by an overpowering spectacle. Three hundred horsemen, arrayed

Arab Soldiers.

in a thousand different hues, scattered about in magnificent disorder, were dashing towards us at full speed, and musket in hand, as though advancing to the assault of a regiment. It was the escort of the Province of El Araish, preceded by the Governor and his officers, coming to relieve the Hadd-el-Gharbia escort at the confines of the Province of Tangier, which we had now reached. The Governor of El Araish, an old exquisite, with a great white beard, signed to his men to halt, shook hands with the ambassador, and then turning once more to the eager, trembling throng at his back, made a quick, decided gesture, as much as to say, "unchain yourselves," and thereupon began as superb a *lab-el-baród* (Powder Play) as one could well wish to see. They advanced to the charge in pairs, in bands of ten singly, from the foot of the valley, from the tops of the hills, ahead of the caravan, and on either side of it, in all directions at once, firing and shouting without cessation. In a few minutes the gorge was filled with smoke and the smell of powder, like a battle-field; on all sides were whirling horses, flashing muskets, fluttering caïks, flapping cloaks, waving caftans of red, blue, yellow, green, and orange color, and the glitter of swords and daggers. They passed us one after another like winged phantoms, old and young, men of colossal stature, wild, terrible figures, sitting erect upon their saddles, with heads thrown back, streaming hair, and guns held aloft, and as he fired

each one uttered a savage cry, which the interpreters translated as follows: "Woe to thee!" "Ah, my mother!" "In the name of God!" "I kill thee!" "Thou diest!" "I am avenged!" Others dedicated their shots to particular persons: "To my master!" "To my horse!" "To my dead!" "To my beloved!" They fired into the air, into the ground, behind them, bending over, and turning upside down, as though they had been strapped to their saddles, those whose turbans or caïks fell off in these manœuvres wheeling about and catching them up on the ends of their muskets on a full run. Some spun their guns around above their heads, tossed them in the air and caught them again with one hand; their shouts, gestures, and reckless bearing were like those of men frenzied by drink, courting death with fierce joy. Many of them urged their steeds forward as though seeking to expose their lives, and flew on and on, firing as they went, to turn back at last with the pallid set gaze of men who had faced death. From most of the horses' flanks blood was flowing, and the riders' feet, stirrups, and the ends of their cloaks were stained with it. Certain figures made a vivid impression upon me the moment my eyes fell upon them. One was that of a young man with a huge head and shoulders, and an enormous stomach, who wore a red caftan, and uttered cries that might have issued from the breast of a wounded lion; another was a youth of about fifteen, a good-looking scape-

grace, all in white, who shot by me three times, shouting, "My God! my God! my God!" Then there was a tall, lean old man with an evil-looking face, who flew along with half-closed eyes and a devilish smile on his lips, as though he were carrying the plague on his horse's crupper; and a negro, all eyes and teeth, with a great scar across his forehead, who went by bounding furiously in his saddle, as though struggling to free himself from the grasp of an invisible hand. In this manner they proceeded, always keeping abreast of the caravan, mounting and descending the hills, forming into groups, dissolving and re-forming, and again dispersing with every possible combination of brilliant colors that could be imagined, dazzling the eye like the flutter of myriads of flags. All this crowd of persons, and hurly-burly of noise and movement, bursting into unexpected life at the appearance of the sun in that narrow gorge, where it could all be embraced at a single glance, as in an amphitheatre, was so overpowering that it took our breath away, and for some moments no one spoke; then there was a loud simultaneous exclamation of "How beautiful! beautiful! beautiful!"

A short distance beyond the opening of the gorge the ambassador halted, and every one forthwith dismounted to rest in the shade of a group of olives, the El Araish escort continuing to manœuvre in front of us, and the baggage train proceeding towards the spot fixed upon for our next camping-ground. We

had arrived at the "*Kubba*" of Sidi-Liamani; in Morocco *kubba*, which signifies dome, is the name given to those small, square structures surmounted by semi-circular domes where saints are buried. These *kubbas*, very numerous, especially in the southern part of the empire, are generally built upon some eminence hard by a spring and a palm-tree, and can be seen, owing to their dazzling whiteness, for a long distance, thus serving as guides both for travellers and for the faithful who come to visit them. They are usually taken care of by a descendant of the saint—heir of his sanctity as well—who lives in a small hut close by the tomb, and subsists on the alms of pilgrims. The *kubba* of Sidi-Liamani stood on a small hill only a few paces from where we were; some Arab peasants sat before the door, and behind them protruded the head of the decrepit old saint—the present one—gazing at us with stupid wonder. In a few minutes smoke was rising from the kitchens, and before long we sat down to luncheon. An empty sardine box thrown out by the cook was picked up by one of the Arabs, carried off to the *kubba*, and made the subject of minute examination and much animated conversation. The *lab-el-barôd* finally ended, almost all the men belonging to the escort dismounted and scattered about in the little valley, partly to allow their horses to feed and partly to rest themselves, a few remaining in their saddles to keep watch from the neighboring hill-tops. During this interval I

wandered about with the captain, and, guided by certain indications pointed out by him, observed the characteristics of the Moroccoan horses for the first time. They are invariably small, so much so that after my eye had become accustomed to them the European horses, even those of medium height, looked enormous to me on first returning home. They have bright, quick eyes, somewhat flat foreheads, very open nostrils, and prominent cheek-bones; the head is almost always beautiful, the shin and shank somewhat curved, a fact to which they owe their peculiar elasticity of movement. They are slightly sway-backed, falling away, as it were, beneath the saddle, and consequently much better adapted to gallop than to trot. I do not, indeed, remember ever to have seen a horse in Morocco trot. When standing still or walking the handsomest among them do not look well, but the instant they break into a run they are transformed into superb-looking animals. Although they eat much less than our horses, and wear far heavier harness, they stand fatigue much better. The manner, too, of riding differs greatly from ours. There the stirrups are so short that the rider's legs are bent almost at right-angles; the reins are very long, the animal being guided by loose, free movements of the hand; the saddle rises before and behind into what are technically termed by us the pommel and the palette, but these are so high as to hold the rider in a close embrace, render-

ing it extremely difficult for him to lose his seat. He usually wears small boots of yellow leather, without heels or spurs, the stirrups serving in place of the latter; others, again, wear spurs formed of pieces of iron, pointed and shaped like a dagger, which they attach to the heel by means of an iron ring and chain.

Charming things are recounted of the great love of the Arab for his horse, the favorite animal of the Prophet. It is said that he regards him as a sacred being; that every morning at sunrise he places his right hand upon the animal's head, murmuring *bismillah* (in the name of God), and then kisses his hand, which he believes to have been sanctified by the touch; and that he lavishes caresses and care of every sort upon him. All of this may be true, but as far as I was able to observe, this great love does not prevent him from tearing open his horse's flanks without any kind of necessity, or leaving him exposed to the sun when he might just as well be in the shade, or leading him an hour's walk to water with his feet hobbled, or causing him to run the risk of breaking his legs a dozen times a day for pure pastime, or, finally, from neglecting his harness in a manner that, were the most particular among them to enter a European cavalry regiment, would send him to the lock-up for six months out of the twelve.

The heat having become intense, we waited for several hours in the shade, but no one succeeded in getting to sleep owing to the insects. This was the

opening engagement of a tremendous warfare, destined to wax hotter from day to day until the very end of the journey. No sooner had we lain down on the ground than we were stuck, pricked, and stung as though we had thrown ourselves on a bed of nettles; it was not only that there were innumerable caterpillars, spiders, ants, ox-flies, and grasshoppers, but that these were large, aggressive, and obstinate to an unheard-of degree. The commander, who with a view to enlivening the company had taken the tone of exaggerating the dangers of the road in the most extravagant manner, assured us that these insects were microscopic as compared with those we would encounter as we approached Fez and after leaving it, and that there would probably be nothing left of us to return to Italy but a few fragments; that only our nearest and dearest would, with difficulty, be able to recognize us. The cook overhearing this statement gave a rather forced smile and became very thoughtful. Near by was an enormous spider's web stretched on some bushes like a sheet spread out to dry. I can hear the commander exclaiming, "Why, everything in this country is gigantic, marvellous, overpowering; the spider that spun this web, for instance, must be at least the size of a horse;" which really did not seem unreasonable, but we could not succeed in finding him, all the same. The only people who were able to sleep were the Arabs, most of them lying out in the sun with processions of creatures marching up

their backs. The two artists were trying to draw, tormented by clouds of ferocious flies, which extracted from Ussi—two or three at a time—all the rich vocabulary of Florentine oaths, "fresh, bold, the very authority of language." The heat having somewhat abated, the Hadd-el-Gharbia escort, the American consul, and the Vice-Governor of Tangier, who had accompanied us thus far in order to give the ambassador the very last good wishes for a safe journey, took their leave, and we proceeded on our way, followed by the three hundred horsemen belonging to the Province of El Araish.

Vast rolling plains, covered here with wheat, there with barley, beyond with yellow stubble, or again, with grass and flowers; a few dark-colored tents; an occasional saint's tomb; here and there a palm or two; in the course of a mile, perhaps, three or four horsemen, who join the escort; an immense solitude, an absolute calm, and torrents of sunshine; these form the sum of the entries I find in my note-book under the head of the second march on May 5th. After travelling three hours we reached Tláta de Raisana, where the camp was pitched. The tents, placed in a circle as usual, stood in a small, deep hollow, covered so thickly with grass and very tall flowers as almost to impede one from walking; it seemed as though we were in a great garden trench. The beds and chests in the tents were almost hidden under daisies, wild poppies, primroses, crowfoot and mal-

lows of all sizes and hues; close by the artists' tent rose two enormous aloes, their branches covered with blossoms. Soon after our arrival the Italian consular agent from El Araish appeared to call upon the ambassador—Signor Guagnino, an old Genoese merchant, who had lived forty years on the Atlantic coast, jealously preserving all that time the pure accent of the language of Balilla; and towards evening an Arab peasant turned up, no one knew where from, to consult the embassy doctor. He was a poor old man, bent and lame. One of the legation soldiers conducted him to Signor Miguerez's tent. The doctor, who speaks Arabic, questioned him, and having found out what the trouble was, began looking through his medicine-chest for a certain drug. Unable to find what he wanted he sent for Mohammed Ducali and asked him to write on a sheet of paper in Arabic a prescription, which the sick man would find no difficulty in having made up when he got back among his own people, as it was a medicine much used by them. While Ducali wrote the old man murmured a prayer. The prescription finished, the doctor handed it to the patient, who, without giving him time to protest, seized the paper and stuffed it into his mouth with both hands. "No! no!" cried the doctor; "spit it out, spit it out!" But it was too late; he had chewed and swallowed it with the avidity of a starving man, and thanking the doctor was about turning to go away. It was with the utmost difficulty that they could make him under-

stand that the virtue of the remedy did not consist in the paper it was written on and persuade him to take another prescription away with him.

This incident will hardly cause surprise among those who are at all familiar with the state of medical science in Morocco, where the profession is practised almost exclusively by quacks, conjurors and saints. Bleeding, the juice of a few herbs and sarsaparilla for *morbo celtico;* dried snakes or chameleons for intermittent fevers; red-hot irons applied to wounds; certain verses from the Koran inscribed by the practitioner upon his patient or else worn around the latter's neck; such are the principal remedies in use among them. Anatomy being a study forbidden by the Mohammedan religion, one may easily imagine how far surgery has advanced; suffice it to say that the surgeons tear their patients' tonsils out with their fingers, and undertake to operate upon stone with a razor or the first bit of metal they can lay their hands upon. Amputation is viewed with horror, those few Arabs who are attended by European doctors preferring to die amid the most frightful sufferings rather than submit to an operation that would save their lives. The consequence is, that although it is not uncommon for them to lose a limb, especially from the explosion of guns, they so rarely survive that one hardly ever sees any one in Morocco going about in a mutilated condition, the few exceptions being usually those unfortunate wretches whose hands have

been lopped off by the executioner's knife, and the stump plunged into boiling pitch, according to custom, to stop the bleeding.

Their remedies, violent as they frequently are, as, for example, that of the red-hot iron, are often attended with admirable results. They are applied brutally, fearlessly, pitilessly; but whether from an absence of nervous sensibility or owing to a certain fortitude engendered by their fatalistic beliefs, these people will voluntarily submit to the most frightful pain. They bleed themselves with earthenware cups and enough heat to roast the flesh; drive the knife blindly into an abscess, at the risk of opening an artery; draw live coals across an ulcerated arm with a steady hand, blowing away the smoke from their own burning flesh without uttering so much as a groan. The diseases most common among them are fevers, ophthalmia, scurvy, elephantiasis, dropsy, and, most common of all, syphilis, handed down from generation to generation, changed, reappearing under new and horrible forms; whole tribes are afflicted with it, thousands of unfortunates die of it, and many more would die were it not for the extremely temperate diet they are forced to observe in consequence of their poverty and the nature of the climate. Of European doctors there are none except in the coast towns; even in Fez there are only a few quacks, fled thither from Algeria or some Spanish garrison. When the Emperor, or one of his min-

isters, or a wealthy Moor, falls ill, a European physician is summoned, but usually not until the patient has reached the very last extremity, the disease having sometimes been neglected for years, so that it not infrequently happens that the doctor only arrives in time to be present at the death-bed. At first they have a blind faith in the power of European practitioners; the sight of the medicines, the chemical preparations, the surgical instruments, all combine to give them a very lofty idea of the science, and they expect the most wonderful results, taking the first prescriptions and following the first directions with the cheerful obedience of people certain of being rapidly cured; but if recovery does not immediately follow they lose faith at once, break off the treatment, and go back to the quacks.

The evening passed without the occurrence of any incident worthy of note, unless I except my discovery of a large black scorpion under the pillow of my bed, just as I was about to lie down. My alarm was, however, not of long duration, for on approaching it carefully, candle in hand, to make a closer examination, I read upon the animal's back the following reassuring words: *Cesare Biseo fece addi, 5 Maggio,* 1875.

At daybreak the next morning we started in the direction of the city of Alcazar. The weather was gloomy, and the gorgeous coloring of the escort stood out with marvellous effect against the gray sky and

deep green of the plain. Hamed Ben Kasen Buhamei, motionless upon a mound near the camp, seemed to be gazing with pride upon those fine-looking horsemen who defiled in troops before him; silent, serious, their eyes fixed upon the horizon, like the advance guard of an army on the day of battle. For a long distance we journeyed on among olives and lofty shrubs; then we entered a vast plain all covered with yellow and purple wild flowers, where the escort broke up to perform the *lab-el-barôd*. This spectacle, witnessed to-day in that great open space, upon that carpet of flowers, beneath that lowering sky, was so singularly beautiful that the ambassador halted more than once, and made every one else do the same, in order to watch it. I hardly think that any fixed rule can be followed in the forming and dissolving of the various groups of riders, but that morning I almost suspected that it might be so. It really seemed as though every movement, every combination of color, had been carefully thought out beforehand. Into the middle of such and such a group of horsemen in blue caftans another wearing a white one was sure to thrust himself—in the midst of a bunch of white caftans there always appeared, like the sure stroke of an artist's brush, a red one. Harmonious colors sought each other out, flowed together, mingled during each charge, and separated to form into new combinations. There were three hundred men, and they seemed to be an army. We saw them in all direc-

tions, fluttering around us like flocks of birds; they deafened, dazzled, bewitched us, and filled the two painters with despair. "Rabble," said Ussi, "if I only had them in my clutches in Florence!"

ALCAZAR EL KEBIR.

ALCAZAR EL KEBIR.

At a certain point on the road the ambassador made a sign to the Kaïd, the escort halted, and we, accompanied by a few soldiers, turned a little aside to visit the ruins of an ancient bridge. On reaching the river-bank we paused; there was nothing of what we had come to see save a few rude fragments on the opposite shore. We stood, however, for some moments, gazing alternately on these and the surrounding country, each one occupied with his own thoughts, and truly the spot was worthy of that mute tribute of respect. Two hundred and ninety-seven years before, on the fourth day of August, those beflowered fields echoed to the thunder of fifty great guns and the tramp of forty thousand horsemen under the command of one of the first captains of Africa and one of the most youthful, adventurous and unfortunate monarchs of Europe. Down the banks of that river, dripping with blood and begging for mercy, there fled a disordered throng, seeking the water as a refuge from the implacable cimeters of the Arabs, Berbers and Turks—the flower of Portuguese nobility—courtiers, bishops, Spanish soldiers, the

soldiers of William of Orange, Italian, German and French adventurers—and the Mussulman cavalry that day trampled under foot six thousand Christian corpses.* We were standing on the field of the memorable battle of Alcazar, which threw Europe into consternation and caused a cry of joy to resound from Fez to Constantinople. The river is the Machassan, and at the time of the battle the Alcazar road crossed it by this bridge. Close by was the encampment of Mulai Malek, the Sultan of Morocco, who advanced from Alcazar, while the King of Portugal came from the direction of Azîla. The battle was fought on the two banks of the river and the surrounding plain. How many thoughts came crowding into our minds as we stood there! but, except for the ruins of the bridge, there was not so much as a stone to recall the past. From what direction did the Duke de Riveiro's cavalry make their first victorious charge? At what spot did Mulai-Ahmed, the Sultan's brother, fight? He who was to be the future conqueror of the Soudan, a captain in the morning, not unsuspected of cowardice, at night a victorious king. At what point on the river did Mohammed the Black drown himself? that discrowned fratricide, the instigator of the war. In what corner of the field did Sebastian receive the shot and the two sabre cuts that destroyed with him the independence of Portugal

* H. M. P. De la Martinière states that "the field was strewn with 15,000 corpses."—*Trans.*

Native Russian Clothes in a River.

and Camoens' last hope? And where did the litter stand in which Sultan Malek, with finger on lip, expired, surrounded by his officers? As we stood revolving thoughts like these in our minds, the escort remained watching us from a distance as immovable in the midst of that famous plain as though they had been a handful of Mulai-Ahmed's famous cavalry, risen from the earth at the sound of our footsteps; and yet probably not one of those men knew that we were standing on the scene of the "battle of the three kings," the glory of their forefathers, and when we all resumed our journey together they kept on looking all about curiously as though trying to discover some peculiarity in the grass or flowers to account for our interest.

We now crossed the Machassan and the Warur, both small affluents to the Kús or Lukkos, the Luxus of the ancients, which flowing down from the Rif Mountains where it has its source, empties itself into the Atlantic at El Araish, and proceeded in the direction of Alcazar across a series of arid hills, meeting in the course of every half-hour or so an Arab or some camels. If we keep on going, we thought to ourselves, we will reach a city some time. It was three days now since we had seen a house, and we were all beginning to feel that for one day at least we would gladly be rid of the monotonous solitude of the country. Alcazar would, moreover, be the first town of the interior that we had seen, and finally, we knew

that we were expected. Curiosity was rife, the escort fell into line, and as we advanced we too, without quite knowing how, formed into two lines like a troop of cavalry, the ambassador at the head and the interpreters on either side. The weather had cleared and a spirit of joyful impatience took possession of the entire caravan. After journeying thus for four hours we reached a certain hill-top and found ourselves quite unexpectedly gazing down upon Alcazar, lying in the plain below, surrounded by a girdle of gardens and crowned with towers, minarets and palm-trees, while at the same moment our ears were saluted by a discharge of musketry and a burst of infernal music. It was the Governor of the city, who, with his officers, a troop of soldiers and a band of music, was coming forth to receive us. In a few moments we met.

Ah, he who has never beheld the band of Alcazar, those ten performers upon the fife and horn, centenarians and ten-year-old boys, one and all mounted upon donkeys about the size of large dogs, ragged, half-naked, with shaven heads, mummy faces and the pose of satyrs, has missed what seemed to me the most mournfully comic sight under the vault of heaven. While the old Governor welcomed the minister, the soldiers continued to discharge their muskets and the band to play. We approached to within about a half-mile of the city, where, on an arid plain, the camp was to be pitched; the band accompanied us, still per-

forming. As soon as it was ready, we repaired to the mess-tent, while the escort went through the usual manœuvres, and the band, drawn up before us, continued to play with ever-increasing fury. A supplicating gesture from the ambassador finally caused them to stop, and then a rather curious scene was enacted. Two men presented themselves almost simultaneously on the ambassador's right and left, the one an Arab, the other a negro. The latter, who was well dressed in a white turban and blue caftan, placed at the minister's feet a jug of milk, a case of oranges and a dish of Kuskussú; the Arab, evidently a poor man, and wearing the ordinary cape, presented a sheep. This done, there was an interchange of fiery glances; they were, it seemed, mortal enemies.

The ambassador, who knew of and expected them, sent for the interpreter, seated himself, and opened the inquiry, they having come to get him to decide their quarrel. The negro was a sort of steward of the old grand sherif Bakali, one of the most influential persons about the court at Fez, and proprietor of considerable property in the neighborhood of Alcazar. The Arab was a peasant, and a feud had existed between them for some time. The negro, strong in the protection afforded by his master, had caused the other to be thrown into prison and fined more than once on charges—which he supported by many witnesses—of stealing his horses, cattle and merchandise. The Arab, while constantly affirming

his innocence, could find no one brave enough to undertake his defence against his powerful persecutor. So one fine morning, quitting his native village, he betook himself to Tangier, and asking which of the ambassadors was considered the most just and generous, was given the name of the representative of Italy. He thereupon proceeded to sacrifice a lamb before the minister's door, by this sacred rite, which no one can refuse to regard, establishing his claim to the protection and justice of the legation. The ambassador granted him a hearing, interested himself in the matter, and through the El Araish agent made application to the authorities of the city of Alcazar; but unfortunately, owing to the distance, the intrigues of the negro, and the indifference of the authorities, the poor Arab was no better off than before, but rather worse, as he was made the object of fresh accusations and persecutions. Now the presence of the ambassador in person was to cut the knot of the difficulty.

Each was told to give his own version of the affair, the interpreter rapidly translating all the while.

Nothing more dramatic could well be imagined than the contrast afforded by the figures and language of the two men. The Arab, a sickly, sad-looking man of about thirty, pleaded his cause with irresistible passion, trembling, shivering, calling upon God, striking the ground with his clinched fists, covering his face with his hands in an attitude of utter

despair, and flashing looks upon his enemy which no words can express. He declared that the other had corrupted the witnesses and intimidated the authorities; that he had thrown him into prison solely to extort money from him, just as he had imprisoned others in order to take possession of their wives; that he had sworn to kill him; that he was the scourge of the country, accursed of God, a veritable fiend; and thereupon he displayed the scars on his bare arms and legs made by the prison fetters, his voice meanwhile choking with agony. The negro, every feature of whose face bore out the truth of one at least of these assertions, listened without looking up, and made his reply to the charges without a change of expression, while an almost imperceptible smile lurked about the corners of his mouth; immovable, impassible, sinister, like a statue of perfidy.

The discussion continued for some time, and appeared to be going on indefinitely, when the ambassador cut it short by giving an order which was apparently acceptable to both sides. Summoning Selam, who appeared instantly, his great black eyes stretched to their utmost, he told him to mount a horse and ride with all speed to the Arab's village, distant about an hour and a half, and there obtain all possible information from the inhabitants regarding the persons and events in question. The negro thought within himself, "These people are afraid of me; either they will support what I have said or they will say noth-

ing at all." The Arab, on the contrary, thought, and it seemed with more reason, that, interrogated by a soldier of the ambassador, they would have sufficient courage to speak the truth. Selam flew off like an arrow, and the two disputants withdrew. I did not see them again, but I learned later that all the inhabitants of the village having testified in favor of the Arab and against the negro, the latter, through the representations of the ambassador, was compelled to restore all the money he had extorted from his victim. While this was going on the remaining tents had been pitched, the usual procession of unfortunates had brought the customary *mona*, and some of the inhabitants of Alcazar had come out to the neighborhood of the camp. As soon as the heat had abated a little we all started off on foot to visit the city, preceded, flanked and followed by armed soldiers. We noticed, as we went along, some distance off, and standing between the city and the camp, a curious-looking building, all arches and domes, with an inclosure in the middle that looked like a cemetery. They told us that it was one of those *zaouias*, now fallen into ruins, which at the period when Moorish civilization flourished used to contain libraries, schools of letters and science, hospitals for the poor, and inns for the accommodation of travellers, besides a mosque and mortuary chapel, being then, as now, for the most part the property of the religious orders. We were now close to the gates. The city is surrounded

by old crenelated walls; near the gate through which we are to enter rise the tombs of several saints, surmounted by green domes; as we pass in our attention is attracted by a noise, and on raising our eyes we see, standing erect upon the house-tops, numbers of large storks, who strike their beaks noisily, as if to warn the inhabitants of our approach. As we walk along some women take refuge in the houses, and the children run away. The dwellings are small, unplastered, windowless, separated by dark and dirty lanes. The streets resemble the beds of mountain torrents; sometimes we come across the carcass of a dog or a donkey lying in a corner. On we tramp through manure, over rough stones, and into deep holes, stumbling and jumping at every step. Soon the inhabitants begin to crowd about us, gazing at the strange sight wonderingly, and the soldiers exhibit so much zeal in clearing the way with their fists and the butt-ends of their guns that the ambassador is obliged to remonstrate. A throng of people go before and follow after us; when any of our party halts suddenly and faces about they all stop, too, some of them running away and others hiding. Sometimes a woman shuts a door in our faces, or a child gives a howl of terror at sight of us, the former resembling a bundle of dirty rags, the latter, as a rule, entirely naked. Boys of ten or eleven go about clad only in a tunic tied about the waist with a cord. Little by little the crowd grows bolder, looking with

marks of especial interest at our boots and shoes. A few boys even go so far as to touch the edge of our clothing. At the same time the ruling expression of all those faces is anything but friendly. A woman, as she runs away, flings some words at the ambassador, which the interpreter translates, "May God destroy your race!" A young man calls out, "God grant us a good day's victory over those people!" After while we come to a rough, stony, open space, where we find difficulty in walking at all; some horrible-looking old women, almost entirely naked, are seated on the ground with bundles of straw and loaves of bread in front of them, awaiting customers. We pass through other streets. Every hundred feet we find a large arched doorway, which at night is closed. All the houses are equally bare, cracked and forlorn. Then we visit the bazaar; it is covered by a roof made of cane and tree-branches, dropping to pieces in every direction. The shops consist of deep niches, the shopkeepers sitting in them like so many wax figures, while the display of goods is like the trash boys collect to play store with. People lie about in all the corners, sleepy, wondering, melancholy; scabby children, old men, who seem almost to have lost the human form; it is like walking through the corridors of a hospital. The air is filled with aromatic odors; not a voice is heard. The crowd, which still accompanies us, is perfectly silent, like a procession of ghosts. Leaving the bazaar, we meet

Entrance to a Mellà.

a Moor on horseback, some laden camels, a hag who shakes her fist at the ambassador, and an old saint, crowned with aloes, who laughs in our faces. At a certain point we see some men approaching, dressed in black, with long hair and light-blue handkerchiefs on their heads; they salute us with smiling humility, and their leader, a ceremonious old man, invites the ambassador to visit the *Mellà* or Jews' quarter, given that outrageous name, which means "salted" or "accursed" ground, by the Arabs. The ambassador agreeing, we pass beneath a covered gateway and plunge into a labyrinth of narrow lanes, more wretched, squalid and foul-smelling even than those of the Arab town, winding between houses that look like animals' dens, by little open spaces resembling pig-sties, and court-yards like open sewers; while in every direction, amid all this filth, beautiful women and children give us smiling greeting, murmuring *Buenos dias! Buenos dias!* as we pass. Now and then we have actually to hold our breath and walk on tiptoe. The ambassador waxes indignant. "How can you," he says to the old Jew, "go on living in this dirt?" "It is the custom of the country," responds the other. "The custom of the country! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves. You claim the protection of the legations, talk about civilization, and call the Moors savages, while all the time that you have the effrontery to look down on them you are living far worse than they!" The Jew merely bends his head and

smiles, as much as to say, "What curious ideas!" As we quit the *Mellà* the crowd again surrounds us. The vice-consul caresses a child in passing; great signs of wonder and an approving murmur; the soldiers are obliged to disperse the children, who come running up from every direction. We walk rapidly down a deserted street, little by little the people are left behind, until at last, gaining the outside of the walls, we find ourselves on a road bordered by enormous Indian figs and lofty palm-trees, and draw a great breath of relief at finding ourselves once more alone.

Such is the city of Alcazar, usually called Alcazar el Kebir, which means the large palace. Tradition says that it was founded in the twelfth century by that Abù-Yussuf Yakúb-el-Mansar, of the Almohodes dynasty, who won the battle of Alarcos against Alonzo IX. of Castile, and erected the famous Tower of *Giralda* in Seville. The story goes that as he was hunting one evening he lost his way, and a fisherman taking him into his hut for the night, the grateful Caliph caused a palace and a number of other buildings to be erected on the spot. Around these the city gradually grew up. At one time it was both rich and flourishing; now the population numbers a bare five thousand, including both Arabs and Jews, and it is very poor, notwithstanding the advantages it enjoys from being situated on the direct route over which all caravans are obliged to travel on their way from the North to the South.

As we passed the gate by which we had entered the town we noticed an Arab boy of some ten or twelve years walking slowly along, his legs very stiff and wide apart, who swayed about in a curious manner. Some other boys were following him. We stopped, and as he approached we saw that a heavy piece of iron, about eight inches long, was fastened to his legs by means of a couple of rings passed around his ankles. He was a lank, dirty boy, with a disagreeable face. The ambassador began questioning him through the interpreter.

"Who put that iron on you?"

"My father," answered the boy roughly.

"Why did he do it?"

"Because I will not learn to read."

We were all inclined to doubt this statement, but an Arab who was standing by declared that it was so.

"And how long have you worn it?"

"For three years," he answered, smiling bitterly.

This we thought must be a lie, but again the Arab confirmed what he had said, adding that the boy slept with the iron on, and that all Alcazar knew about it. Then the ambassador, moved to compassion, made him a little speech, exhorting him to study, to rid himself of the shame of that thing, and not to disgrace his family in that fashion, and finally, when the interpreter had finished translating it, told him to ask the boy if he had any answer to make.

"I have this answer to make," he replied, "that if I have to wear this iron for the rest of my life I will never learn to read, and that I have made up my mind to let them kill me rather than learn to read."

The ambassador regarded him attentively, the boy undergoing the examination imperturbably.

"Gentlemen," said the ambassador at length, turning towards us, "our mission is concluded," and so saying led the way to the camp, the boy re-entering the town with his instrument of torture.

"In a few years," said one of the soldiers of the guard, "that head will be seen dangling over one of the gateways of Alcazar."

BEN-AOUDA.

BEN-AOUDA.

At sunrise the next morning we crossed the river Kús, on whose right bank the city of Alcazar is situated, and once more proceeded across rolling, flower-besprinkled, deserted plains, whose confines stretched beyond our vision. The escort had broken up into small bands, each of which resembled a sultan's retinue, and was scattered over a wide circuit. The two artists galloped hither and thither, pencil and sketch-book in hand, making drawings of horses and riders. The other members of the embassy rode along talking about the invasion of the Goths, trade, scorpions, philosophy, eagerly listened to by the party of mounted servants who followed close behind. Civo paid particular attention to the discourses on philosophy, while Hamed, on the contrary, seemed deeply interested in an account his master, Patxot, was giving of a bear hunt in which he had come near losing his life. This man Hamed was, after Selam, the most remarkable of the entire lot of soldiers, servants and grooms. He was an Arab, about thirty years of age, very tall, dark, muscular, strong as a bull, with smooth face, mild eyes, a sweet smile, a gentle voice,

and an airy grace of movement that contrasted strangely with his powerful frame. He wore a big white turban, blue jacket and zuaves; talked Spanish, and was so clever at knowing just how to do everything and please everyone that even Selam, the glorious Selam, was inclined to be the least bit jealous of him. They were all, in fact, good-looking, cheerful, attentive young fellows, and so eagerly solicitous for our comfort that if one of us in riding along happened to look back he straightway encountered two rows of black eyes fixed inquiringly upon him, anxious to know if he wanted anything. "What a pity," said I to myself, "that we cannot be attacked by thieves, so as to put all this devotion to the proof." After proceeding thus for about two hours we began to meet people. First there came a negro on horseback, holding in his hand one of those little sticks, covered with Arabic inscriptions, called in the language of the country *herrez*, which travellers are wont to obtain from members of the religious orders as talismans against robbers and sickness. Next came some ragged old women, carrying big bundles of wood on their backs. Oh, the power of fanaticism! Bowed and bent as they were, exhausted and panting, they still had sufficient strength left to fling a curse at us in passing. One muttered, "May the curse of God rest upon these unbelievers!" The other, "God preserve us from evil spirits!" Another hour went by without our meeting anyone, and then we came

upon a courier on foot, a poor, lean-looking Arab, with a leather bag hung around his neck containing the mail. He paused on reaching us to say that he was on his way from Fez to Tangier. The ambassador thereupon handed him a letter for the latter place, and he hurried on at a rapid pace. This was none other than a member of the Moroccoan Postal Service, than which no body of men in existence lead more arduous lives. They eat nothing on their journeys save a little bread and some handfuls of figs, stop only for a few hours' rest at night, when they sleep with the end of a burning cord tied to one foot to ensure their awakening at the proper time. They travel an entire day without seeing a tree or a drop of water, traverse forests infested by wild boars, climb mountains inaccessible for mules, swim rivers, walk, run, roll down steep inclines, drag themselves up lofty cliffs on all-fours, under the burning August sun, through the interminable rains of autumn, against the choking wind of the desert, going from Tangier to Fez in four days, and from Tangier to Morocco in a week—travelling from one extremity of the empire to the other barefooted, half-naked, only when they reach their journey's end to turn around and go back again, and receiving by way of recompense a few miserable francs. About half-way between Alcazar and the spot whither we were bound the ground began to rise almost imperceptibly, so that before we knew it we had reached an eminence from which an

extensive view could be obtained of another vast plain stretching away before us, and covered with great patches of yellow, red and white wild flowers, something like huge beds of snow streaked with crimson and gold. Across this plain there advanced to meet us two hundred horsemen on a gallop, their muskets held erect on their saddles, preceded by a personage dressed entirely in white, whom Mohammed Ducali recognized at once, and announced aloud as the Governor Ben-Aouda! We had reached the border-line of the Province of Seffian called Ben-Aouda, after the family name of the Governor, signifying "son of the mare," that name which had so impressed me on hearing it in Tangier. We descended into the plain, the two hundred horsemen drew up in single file beside the three hundred of El Araish, and Governor Ben-Aouda presented himself to the ambassador. Never, if I live to be a hundred, will I forget that countenance. He was a dried-up old man, with a fierce eye, hooked nose, and a mouth almost without lips, shaped in a semicircle, with the points turned down. Consciousness of power, superstition, lust, *kiff*, sloth and an utter weariness of everything in the world were stamped upon his features. A large white turban concealed his forehead and ears, and at his side hung a curved dagger.

The ambassador took leave of the chief of the El Araish escort, who at once departed with his men on a gallop, and we resumed our journey under the

A dance in Morocco.

guardianship of the Seffian escort, with the usual accompaniment of manœuvres and the discharge of fire-arms. The skin of our new friends was darker, their dress more variegated, their horses handsomer, their cries wilder, and their charges directed with more savage impetuosity than anything we had met with heretofore. The farther we advanced the more did everything take on a more distinctively Moroccoan color and form. Conspicuous in all that moving throng were twelve horsemen dressed with princely magnificence, and mounted upon superb animals, who attracted our attention from the first moment, especially as they seemed to be objects of admiration among their companions as well. Five of them, young men of colossal stature, appeared to be brothers; they had pallid complexions, and big black eyes which flashed beneath their huge turbans; again and again they dashed close by us with loosened reins and heads thrown back over their shoulders, in an attitude of haughty disdain. How natural and appropriate it would have seemed had those ten sinewy arms clasped to the crimson saddles five odalisques stolen from a Sultan's harem. "Superb!" we cried. "Wonderful! Magnificent!" and they acknowledged our applause by spurring forward with loud cries, until they disappeared in a cloud of smoke, twirling their long, gold-inlaid muskets above their heads in a perfect fury of triumphant excitement. These were Ben-Aouda's five sons, and the remaining seven were

his nephews. The *lab-el-barôd* lasted for more than an hour, at the end of which we had reached a garden belonging to the Governor, where we dismounted to rest. It was a grove of lemon and orange-trees, planted in parallel lines, and so close together as to form a thick roof of foliage, beneath which we enjoyed the most delicious shade and coolness, and the perfumes of Paradise. In a few moments this charming oasis was invaded by and filled with horses, mules, kitchen-fires, busy servants and sleepy soldiers. The Governor dismounted with us and introduced his sons. I take my oath that had I seen the five odalisques clinging to them at that moment I would not have had the face even to envy them, so handsome were they, so stately, so charming. One after another they shook hands with us, making at the same time a slight inclination and dropping their smiling eyes in a sort of childish embarrassment. Immediately afterwards they asked to see the doctor. Signor Miguerez came forward and inquired what they wanted, and thereupon, before us all, without uttering a word and almost simultaneously, they bared their left arms.

Oh, my poor odalisques! Every one of them was affected from shoulder to wrist with a horrible syphilitic disease. "Hereditary," observed one of them, and the father repeated coldly, "Hereditary."

"And there are sulphur springs close by!" exclaimed the doctor, "where they could easily have been cured; but oh, no, gentlemen, they must fool

away their time and health with verses from the Koran and amulets prepared by quacks!" He gave them some medicine, they re-covered their arms, and walked thoughtfully away. A little later we seated ourselves upon a beautiful Rabât rug in the centre of the garden, and luncheon was served. Governor Ben-Aouda, seated upon another rug some twenty feet away, had his own repast served at the same time, waited upon by a number of his slaves. An amusing interchange of courtesies between him and the ambassador now took place. First Ben-Aouda sent over a jug of milk, and the ambassador returned the attention with a beefsteak; next came some butter, which was responded to with fritters; the butter was followed by a sweet dish, and the fritters by a box of sardines; each gift being dispatched and received with coldly ceremonious gestures, hands laid upon the breast, and eyes cast up to heaven with the most comical expression of gastronomic bliss. The sweet dish, by way of parenthesis, was a sort of pudding made of honey, eggs, butter and sugar, of which the Arabs are extravagantly fond, and about which they have a singular superstition: if while the woman is in the act of cooking it a man should happen to enter the room, the pudding goes wrong, and even if it is fit to eat it is unsafe to do so.

"And how about wine?" asked some one; "is no wine to be offered him?" Whereupon a discussion arose; we were assured that Ben-Aouda was secretly

much addicted to the juice of the vine, but how could he possibly drink wine in the presence of his soldiers? Finally it was decided not to send him any; but it seemed to me that he cast very sweet looks in the direction of our bottles—much sweeter, in fact, than those directed towards ourselves. During the entire time, indeed, that he sat there on his rug his features wore such an evil expression of frowning and haughty disdain that I longed to have our forty battalions of Bersaglieri there and under my orders for just a little while, so that I could make them defile under his very nose.

During the repast Mohammed Ducali told me a rather striking incident connected with the personal history of the Ben-Aouda family—in whose hands it seems the governorship of the Seffian district has been from very ancient times. The inhabitants of this part of the country are famed for their bravery, as well as for their turbulent dispositions, and are said to have given splendid proof of their courage in the recent war with Spain, in which, at the battle of Vad-Rason, on the 23d of March, 1861, Sidi-Absalom-ben-Abd-el-Krim Ben-Aouda, Governor of the entire Province of Garb, lost his life. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Sidi-Abd-el-Krim, a violent, dissolute man, who ground his people down with taxes, and persecuted them to gratify his ferocious caprices. One fine day he suggested to a certain Gileli Ruqui that he should give him a large sum of money; the

man excused himself on the ground that he was too poor. Upon which the Governor loaded him with chains and threw him into prison. The relatives and friends of Gileli then sold all their possessions, made up the required amount, and brought it to Sidi-Abd-el-Krim, who forthwith liberated the prisoner. No sooner, however, did he find himself free than Gileli assembled his family and friends together, and they bound themselves with a solemn oath to kill the Governor. The residence of Ben-Aouda stood at about two hours distance, by the road, from the garden where we were sitting. The conspirators attacked it suddenly in the middle of the night, in overpowering numbers, killed the sentinels, and pouring into the house slew Sidi-Abd-el-Krim, his wives, his children, his slaves and his servants with their daggers, and after destroying all they could lay hands on, and setting fire to the house, spread themselves over the surrounding country, raising the cry of revolt. The relatives and allies of the Ben-Aoudas assembled their forces in hot haste and marched upon the rebels, who repulsed them, and the rebellion spread over the entire Province of Garb; but the Sultan sending an army to the scene of the revolt, it was, after a sanguinary struggle, suppressed—the heads of the ringleaders adorned the walls of Fez and of Morocco, the district of Beni-Malek was separated from the rest of the province, the Governor's house rebuilt, and Sidi-Mohammed Ben-Aouda, brother of the murdered man.

and host of the Italian embassy, assumed the government of the district of his fathers. A passing triumph of desperation over tyranny, followed by a tyranny still more oppressive. Thus may the history of each individual province be summed up, as well as that of the entire Empire. And who knows but that at that very moment a Ruqui had already been predestined for Sidi-Mohammed Ben-Aouda himself.

Before sunset we had reached the camp, pitched not a very long distance beyond the garden, in a solitary plain at the foot of a small hill, upon whose summit stood a *kubba* and a palm-tree. The ambassador had hardly arrived when the *mona* was brought and placed as usual before his tent, and the distribution took place in the presence of the intendant, the Kaïd, and the soldiers and servants. While everyone's attention was absorbed in this manner I happened to glance towards the *kubba* and saw a tall, strange-looking man coming down the incline with long strides in the direction of the camp. There could be no doubt about it, it was the hermit, the "saint," descending upon us to make a scene. I did not say a word, but waited to see what would happen. Instead of entering the camp at once he made a circuit around the outside, in order to appear suddenly in front of the ambassador's tent. I could see him stealing nearer and nearer on tiptoe, a ghastly object, covered with black rags, who inspired both fear and

Procession bringing in Heads of Rebels.

disgust. All at once he quickened his pace, dashed into our midst, and, recognizing the ambassador at a glance, flung himself against him, at the same time howling like a maniac; but he hardly had time to do this before the Kaïd seized him by the throat and threw him in among the soldiers, who promptly dragged him out of the camp, stifling his piercing cries in their cloaks. Signor Morteo hastened to translate for our benefit the poor wretch's invectives. "Death to all these dogs of Christians who go to see the Sultan and do just as they like, while we are dying of hunger!"

Not long after the presentation of the obligatory *mona* there arrived at the camp a party of a hundred or more Arab and negro servants, marching in single file, and bearing great round boxes covered with lofty, conical straw tops, filled with eggs, chicken already cooked, puddings, pastry, roasts, kuskussú, salad and sweetmeats, enough provision in all to feed a starving tribe. It was a second *mona*, voluntary this time, an offering made to the ambassador by Sidi-Mohammed Ben-Aouda, possibly to atone for his black looks of the morning. No sooner had the dishes been placed on the ground than the Governor and his five sons appeared on horseback, accompanied by a troop of servants. The ambassador received them in his tent, and conversed with them by means of an interpreter. What a conversation! and what people they were! The ambassador asked one of the sons if he had ever heard of Italy, and he replied

that he had heard it spoken of *several times*. One of them wanted to know which was farthest from Morocco, England or Italy. They asked how many guns we had, the name of our capital city, and how our king was dressed. As they talked they all six observed with great attention the knots of our cravats and our watch-chains. The ambassador put several questions to the Governor regarding the extent and population of his district, but he either could not answer or was, as usual, afraid of some hidden, mysterious object in the question; at all events it was impossible to drag a satisfactory reply out of him.

"The population?" I recollect his saying. "Oh, I could not tell you the exact number."

"Well, then, about," urged the ambassador.

"It is difficult to say even about what it numbers," said he, and then proceeded to put some more questions of his own. Had we liked the city of Alcazar? What did we think of the country? Did we not consider the water very good? Would we like to live in Morocco? Why had we not brought our wives? How many soldiers had the captain in his command? How large was the commander's ship? While this conversation was going on tea was drunk, and finally, with many bows, handshakings and good wishes, they mounted, put spurs to their horses, and presently disappeared. I use "disappear" each time purposely, instead of "went away," just as I say "appear" instead of "came," because, as we never saw

any houses or villages in any direction, everyone who came and went seemed to rise up out of the ground and vanish away into air.

Like every other day this one, too, ended in a calm and magnificent sunset and a cheerful and noisy dinner, but the night proved to be one of the liveliest of the journey. Perhaps because being in the Seffian territory made it necessary to guard the camp with unusual vigilance, the sentinels kept each other awake by chanting verses from the Koran every quarter of an hour. One would intone the prayer and the others all respond in chorus, at the top of their voices, to an accompaniment of neighing horses and barking dogs. We had just fallen into our first sleep when we were aroused by this exercise, and did not succeed in closing our eyes again. Shortly after midnight a new feature was added. One of the short intervals of silence was suddenly broken in upon by wild cries from the open country, which continued until daybreak, sometimes close at hand, then faintly heard at a distance, then nearby again; tones of menace, of sorrow, of despair, breaking forth now and again into shrill wails and bursts of crazy laughter that made our blood run cold. It was the saint wandering about the outskirts of the camp and calling down curses from Heaven upon us. In the morning when we came out of our tents he was still there, standing erect like a spectre before his lonely *kubba*, tinged with red by the rising sun, continuing to curse us in

a hoarse, spent voice, and feebly waving his arms above his head.

I looked up the cook, intending to ask his opinion concerning this personage, but I found him so immersed that I had not the heart to poke fun at him. He was making the coffee, surrounded by an impatient throng who fairly took his breath away. The scullions were talking Arabic at him, Ranni, Sicilian; the caulker, Neapolitan; Hamed, Spanish; Signor Vincent, French. "But I do not understand a single word of all your gibberish!" he shouted desperately. "This is worse than Babel! Will you let me breathe? or do you want to kill me? Oh, poor me, what a country! what a country! Every one of them talking like mad, and not one who can make himself understood!"

As soon as he had recovered somewhat I pointed to the saint, who was still howling away on top of the hill. "Well," I said, "what do you think of those insults?" He raised his eyes to the *kubba*, regarded the saint fixedly for a moment, and then, with a gesture of supreme disdain, replied in his strong Piedmontese accent, "I look and pass on," and so saying stalked majestically into his tent.

KARIYA EL-HABASSI.

KARIYA EL-HABASSI.

The camp was dismantled, and we resumed our journey in the usual order and amid the usual noisy shouts and discharge of fire-arms of the escort—the two hundred horsemen of Ben-Aouda. In two hours we had reached the small stream that marks the limits of the Seffian district, and just as the standard-bearer turned to pronounce the words "Here is the river," there suddenly started into view from behind a piece of rising ground on the opposite shore a large crowd of horsemen, among whom we were immediately struck by the graceful and elegant figure of the Governor, Bu-Bekr-ben-el-Habassi, whose district lies between the Seffian territory and the great Sebú river. The Ben-Aouda escort turned about and quickly vanished, while we, after fording the stream, were at once surrounded by the new one.

Bu-Bekr-ben-el-Habassi shook the ambassador heartily by the hand, greeted Ducali—a former schoolmate—warmly, and welcomed the rest of the party with a gesture full of grace and dignity. The embassy then proceeded on its way, but it was some time before any of us were able to take our eyes off

our new host, who was certainly by far the most attractive of any of the Governors whom we had seen as yet. He was of medium height, slight, dark, with penetrating but kindly eyes, a straight aquiline nose and a thick black beard. When he smiled he displayed two rows of handsome teeth. A snow-white cloak of finest texture enveloped his entire person, the hood being drawn down over his turban, and he rode a jet-black horse with sky-blue housings. From his appearance one would judge him to be a generous man, beloved and contented, and unless my imagination deceived me, the two hundred Kariya el-Habassi cavaliers seemed to reflect something of their Governor's kindly disposition. They appeared to me to wear the frank, tranquil expression of men who for many years had enjoyed the almost unheard of blessing of a humane rule. This impression and the cabans which now began to crop up much more frequently by the roadside, combined, with the beautiful weather and sweet-smelling breezes, to nourish for a little while at least the pleasing illusion that this district was an oasis of prosperity in the middle of the poverty-stricken Empire of the Sherifs. A little later we passed through a village consisting of a double row of tents, made of camel's hair, supported on a framework of reeds and sticks; beside each tent was a small garden patch enclosed by a hedge of Indian figs. Beyond the tents horses and cows were grazing. Some groups of half-naked children stood on

the road in front of us waiting to see us pass, while men and women covered with rags peered out from behind the hedges. No one shook his fist at us; no one cursed us. Hardly were we well past the village when the whole population streamed out of their hiding-places, and we saw that they numbered some hundreds of wretched-looking creatures; black, squalid, wondering. The effect was as though the population of a cemetery had risen up before our eyes. A few of them managed to keep up with us for some little time, but the others were soon lost to view behind a piece of rising ground.

The character of the country through which we were now travelling afforded an endless opportunity for picturesque effects in the views we had both of the escort and the caravan. There was a succession of deep, parallel valleys, formed by great waves of earth, all flowered like so many gardens. As we dipped into each valley we would lose sight for a few moments of the escort and then see it coming up from behind the hill back of us; first all the tips of the muskets, then the turbans and fezzes, then the faces, and gradually the entire figures and horses, as though they were rising up from the bowels of the earth; while on reaching the summit of a hill and looking back we would behold all those two hundred horsemen dashing through the smoke-filled valley, which would echo and re-echo to the thunder of their fire. And so on up and down—a long train of horses,

mules, servants and soldiers following at our heels, each appearing for an instant on the summit and then disappearing as though he had plunged down a precipice. Seen thus across all those valleys the caravan looked interminable; it had the imposing air of an army on the march, or an entire population emigrating at once.

At last we came to the village of Kariya el-Habassi, consisting of the Governor's residence and a group of huts and cottages, shaded by some fig-trees and wild olives. The Governor having invited us to dismount for a little while at his house, the rest of the caravan proceeded on their way to the spot selected for our next camping-ground; while we, after traversing two or three court-yards, each enclosed by bare walls, came to a garden, on one side of which was the principal entrance to the house of Ben-el-Habassi, a white structure, devoid of windows and silent as a convent. The Governor having vanished, some mulatto slaves ushered us into a small room on the ground-floor, white also, and having no outlet save the main entrance and a small door in one corner. There were two alcoves, three white mattresses spread on the mosaic pavement, and some embroidered cushions. It was the first time since leaving Tangier that we had had an opportunity to repose between four walls, and we stretched ourselves luxuriously in the alcoves, awaiting with eager curiosity the continuation of the show. The Gov-

Moorish Gateway.

ernor presently reappeared, wrapped from head to foot in a caïc of glistening white. Depositing his yellow slippers in one corner, he seated himself barefoot on one of the mattresses between Ducali and the ambassador. The slaves brought in jugs of milk and dishes of sweetmeats, Ben-el-Habassi himself making the tea, which he poured into exquisite cups of Chinese porcelain, his favorite servant, a young mulatto with tattooed face, handing it around. It would be impossible to give any just idea of the grace and digni y displayed by this, in all probability, grossly ignorant Governor of a few thousand tented Arabs, who in the whole course of his life had most likely never met more than fifty civilized persons. Dropped into the most aristocratic salon in Europe, no one could have discovered the slightest excuse for ridiculing anything about him. He was as clean, dainty and perfumed as an odalisque just out of the bath. At every gesture the caïc, flying back, would reveal here a touch of red, there of blue, and again of orange, all the brilliant coloring of the hidden costume, until we longed to tear off the veil and see what marvels there might be concealed beneath, as children treat their dolls. He conversed with great affability and no apparent curiosity, quite as though he had seen us all the day before. He told us that he had never been out of Morocco, but that he would greatly like to see our railroads and large palaces, and he knew that there were three cities in Italy

named respectively Genoa, Rome and Venice. While he was talking the small door behind him was softly pushed open and the head of a pretty little mulatto girl of ten or twelve was thrust in; after rolling her big eyes rapidly around with an expression of mingled curiosity and terror, she disappeared. This was one of the Governor's children, the mother being a negress. He saw her, but only smiled. A long interval of silence now followed. Aloes were burning in a perfumery-stand in the centre of the room; before the door stood a troop of wondering slaves; behind the slaves rose a group of palms, and beyond the palms smiled the limpid African sky. I suddenly found myself overpowered with wonder at my surroundings. I could not believe that I was the same person as he who was wont to occupy that little room in Turin. The Governor all at once arising I was, however, quickly recalled to a sense of the reality of the situation. Shaking hands with each in turn he donned his slippers, and with a graceful bow disappeared through the small doorway. "He has gone to report to the favorite," said someone, and I could not help wishing that I could hear her questions. "How do they look? What are they like? How do they talk? How are they dressed? Oh, my beloved, let me see them just for one single moment through the crack of the door and I will load you with caresses!" And no doubt, her courteous lover yielding, the mysterious beauty did peep at us from

behind some hiding-place, only to exclaim in terror, "Allah preserve us! What fearful-looking people!"

On our way to the camp, which was pitched about half a mile beyond the Governor's house on a high, level plateau covered with dry grass, we for the first time felt the full power of the heat, so much so that, as Tadino says of the populace of Milan during the plague, we all began to "*chiudere li denti et inarcare le ciglia;*" and this was on the 8th of May, not more than a hundred miles from the shores of the Mediterranean, with the great plain of the Sebú stretching away before us. Notwithstanding the heat, however, the camp at Kariya el-Habassi was enlivened towards evening by an unusual number of visitors. On one side a long line of Arabs, seated on the ground, watched the *lab-el-barôd* of the escort cavalry; on the other were more Arabs playing ball, while a little farther off a group of women, muffled in their coarse *haïks*, gazed at us with much astonishment, gesticulating to one another, and parties of children ran all about. Certainly the population of Ben-el-Habassi seemed less savage than their neighbors of Garb. Biseo and I approached the ball-players, who stopped as soon as they saw us, but after consulting among themselves, recommenced their game. There were fifteen or twenty of them, for the most part tall, broad-shouldered, sinewy youths, wearing nothing but a tunic fastened in at the waist, and a sort of coarse, filthy linen cape wrapped around the body

like a *caïk*. They played somewhat differently from those whom I had seen in Tangier. One gave the ball a kick high in the air with his foot, and the others all tried to catch it as far from the ground as possible, bounding up in great vertical leaps as though they were trying to fly; the one who caught it kicked it in his turn. Frequently in the rush one of the heavier ones would fall, dragging down some of his companions with him, and the others tripping over them, the whole party would roll over and over for some distance, in a tangled, confused mass, kicking and laughing, without caring in the least what was being exposed to the light of day. More than one, as he rolled about, displayed a curved dagger fastened at his belt, and others had little wallets tied about their necks, probably containing verses from the Koran, worn to keep off scurvy. Once the ball falling at my feet, a sudden idea occurred to me; picking it up, I held it out on one palm, and with the other hand made two or three cabalistic signs above, then threw it back. For a few moments none of the players dared to pick it up. They went close to it, touched it gingerly with their feet, examined it, and it was not until he had seen me laugh and make signs to show that I had been joking that one bold spirit picked it up, laughing as well, and threw it back to his companions. Meanwhile the children, who had been running hither and thither, began to crowd around us. There were about fifty of them, and if

their combined wardrobe had been offered for sale, it is not likely that a pedler could have been found willing to give fifty centimes for the lot. Some of them were extremely pretty, many scurvy, almost all coffee-colored, a few a sort of greenish-yellow, as though their skin had been stained with some vegetable substance, and some of them wore pig-tails in the Chinese fashion. At first they kept about ten feet away, watching us suspiciously and exchanging remarks in a low voice; then seeing that we did not make any hostile demonstrations they drew gradually nearer, until they were almost touching us, and began standing on tiptoe, stooping down, bending here and there, so as to see every part of us, just as though we had been two statues, we remaining all the while perfectly still; then one of them touched my shoe with the tip of one finger, withdrawing his hand quickly as though he had burned it; another sniffed at my sleeve. By this time we were entirely surrounded and hemmed in. All sorts of exotic smells saluted our nostrils, we began to fancy that we felt a creeping sensation up our backs. "Come," said Bisco, "it is high time we were rid of them; I have an infallible method," and so saying he briskly took out his sketch-book and pencil, as though he were about to draw some of the faces about us. In a twinkling the whole troop had scattered like a flock of birds. In a few minutes we saw some women approaching us. "Miraculous!" we said to one another; "but

perhaps they are coming to stab us in the name of Mohammed," and we stood on our guard. But they were only some poor, weak, sick creatures with hardly sufficient strength to stand on their feet or hold their arms up to keep the *haïk* over their faces. Among them was one quite young woman, who was sobbing piteously, showing one tear-bedimmed blue eye. Seeing that they were looking for the doctor I pointed out the way, upon which one of them made me understand by signs that she wished to know if they would have to pay. I said "no," and they moved off unsteadily in the direction of the doctor's tent, I following to be present at the consultation. "What is the matter?" asked Signor Miguerez, in Arabic, of the first one. "I have a terrible pain here," she said, pointing to her shoulder. "What is it?" he asked. I do not recollect her reply, but the doctor told her that he would have to see the place, and directed her to bare her shoulder. The woman did not stir. There lay the great difficulty; it was always "I have something here, lower down, higher up, here, there," but not one of them, not even old nonagenarians, would let the doctor make an examination, all insisting that he "could guess." "Now will you or will you not let me see the place?" asked Miguerez finally. The woman still made no motion. "Very well, that being the case I will attend to the others," and he turned to the rest, while the first one went sadly away. The others had no need to

uncover, so the doctor distributed pills and powders, and dismissed them with a "God bless you." Poor creatures, not one of them was probably yet thirty, and they had all lost their youth, a loss which means the beginning of the excessive toil, the brutal treatment and the contempt that go to make the old age of an Arab woman a thing of horror. An instrument of the passions up to twenty, she is a beast of burden for the rest of her life.

Dinner that evening was enlivened by a visit from Ben-el-Habassi, and the disastrous night that followed by a terrible invasion of insects. Already, during the hot part of the day, I had foreseen trouble ahead from the extraordinary signs of life in the grass. The ants formed in long black lines, the beetles lay in heaps, the grasshoppers were as thick as flies, and added to these were many new insects which we had not seen before in any of our other halts, and which filled me with dark suspicions. Captain di Boccard, a connoisseur in entomology, furnished me with their names. Among others there was the *cicindela campestris*, a living pitfall which closes the mouth of its hole with its great head, and drops down suddenly, dragging with it such insects as may have been incautious enough to walk over it; the *Pheropsophus africanus*, which shoots a puff of corrosive vapor over its pursuing enemy; the *Meloe majalis*, which can hardly drag along its huge abdomen, like that of a person with dropsy, stuffed with

grass and eggs; the *Carabus rugosus*, the *Pamelia scabrosa*, the *Cetonia opaca*, the *Cossyphus Hoffmanseggi*—animated leaves which Victor Hugo would describe in a way to make your blood curdle. Then any number of great lizards, spiders, centipedes as long as your hand, singing crickets as large as a thumb, green bugs the size of a sou-piece, all of which came and went as though they were preparing by common agreement for some warlike enterprise. And as if this were not enough, hardly were we seated at table when, on reaching out my hand to pour out something to drink, I espied a ridiculous-looking locust peeping at me around my glass, who, instead of flying away in alarm at my threatening gesture, calmly continued to gaze at me with impertinant audacity. At length, to complete our demoralization, as we got up from table Hamed appeared with the look of a man who has just passed through some great danger, and proceeded to display before our very eyes nothing less than a tarantula, a veritable *lycosa tarentula*, impaled upon a toothpick, that terrible spider which "*cuando pica a' un hombre*"—when it bites a man—said he, "Allah have mercy upon him! The unfortunate one begins to laugh and cry, to sing and dance, and nothing but good music, really good music, the Sultan's band, for instance, can save him!" Now let the reader try to imagine for himself with what sensations I looked forward to the night. I and my three companions had, however,

ceased talking, the lights were out, and we had been some moments in bed before any one felt anything; this, however, was merely a slight interval of truce. The commander suddenly leaped into a sitting position, calling out, "I am fairly alive!" and then we all began to have sensations. At first there were only light touches, timid prickings, ticklings, the tentative provocations of light advance-guards, to which we could afford to pay no attention. But before long the main body of the army took the field, and vigorous defensive operations became necessary. The battle waged fiercely, but the harder we fought the more rapidly did the enemy send reinforcements to the front. They came from beneath the bolsters, crept up from the foot of the beds, dropped from the top of the tent; they seemed to be carrying out some prearranged order of attack, to belong to different parts of a great strategic design, conceived in the brain of an insect of genius; apparently it was a religious war; in short, we were finally obliged to change our policy or acknowledge ourselves beaten. "The light!" shrieked the vice-consul. We all four bounded simultaneously to the ground, lit the light, and the massacre began. The rank and file were slaughtered indiscriminately, while the leaders, the great men, were first classified by the captain, then condemned by the commander, the vice-consul placed them on the pyre and I delivered the funeral oration in prose or choice verse, which will be

published after my death. In a short space of time the ground was strewn with wings, claws, legs and heads, the survivors dispersed, and we, weary of slaughter, after having mutually appointed one another chevaliers of various orders, once more laid our tired heads upon our pillows. But what an uproar we made! What mad rejoicings, even though there was not a whole skin among us! What shrieks of laughter that shook us from head to foot and did us good, body and soul!

At sunrise the next day Governor Ben-el-Habassi again presented himself to accompany the ambassador to the confines of his district. No sooner had we descended from the high ground of the encampment than we saw, stretching away before our eyes to the horizon, the immense plain of the Sebú. This river, one of the largest of the Moghreb, descends from the western slope of that spur of mountains which extends from the upper Atlas towards the Strait of Gibraltar, flows over a course of nearly two hundred and forty kilometres, swelled by numerous tributary streams, and describing a circuit near its mouth empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Mehdía, where the deposit of sand, as at the mouths of almost all the rivers of Morocco of that size, prevents the entrance of ships and causes tremendous inundations at the season of the overflow. The basin of this river embraces at one end all that district lying between El Araish and Sla, and at the other borders on the high basin of the

Muluya (that large river that marks the eastern boundary of the Moghreb), and opens to Europeans, by the coast and Taza, a way to the city of Fez, and not to Fez alone, but to the great city of Mequinez —the third capital—as well. Thus it includes, one may say, the political life of the empire and the principal seats of the wealth and power of the sherifs. It is worthy of note that the Sebú marks the northern boundary beyond which the Sultan never passes unless in time of war, the three cities of Fez, Morocco and Mequinez, in which he resides by turns, all lying to the south of it, as well as the twin cities of Sla-Rabât, which he visits on his way from Fez to Morocco—this détour being made in order not to cross the chain of mountains which closes the valley of the Sebú to the south, inhabited by a tribe called the Zairis, a mixed Berber race, who share with that of Beni-Mtir the reputation of being the most turbulent and indomitable inhabitants of those mountains. An hour's ride brought us to the Sebú. It seemed to me as though I were looking at the Tiber flowing across the Roman Campagna. At this point it was about three hundred and fifty feet wide, mud-colored, swollen, rapid, shut in between two lofty banks almost vertical and perfectly bare, rising from two strips of muddy ground. A couple of antediluvian boats, propelled by a dozen or so Arabs, were approaching the shore. These boats would be sufficient in themselves to give a fair idea of Morocco. For

hundreds of years sultans, pashas, caravans and ambassadors have crossed the river on just such old hulks as these, with their feet resting in mud and water, sometimes at the risk of being drowned. And when, as frequently happens, the bottoms have holes stove in them, caravans and embassies, and pashas and sultans wait, sometimes for several hours, in sun or rain, until the boatmen have closed them up with mud or anything else they can lay hands on. And for hundreds of years horses, mules and camels, for want of a piece of board six feet long, have risked breaking their legs, or actually have broken them, in the effort to jump on board from the bank. It never seems to have occurred to anyone to build a bridge of boats, or bring a six-foot plank to the spot; while should anyone reproach these people for not having done either the one or the other he would be looked upon with profound amazement, as though he had taken them to task for not performing some wonderful feat. In many places the rivers are crossed in cane boats, and troops are usually gotten over on floating bridges, made of inflated skins with earth and tree branches on top. We all dismounted, and descended the bank by a steep path. The first boat, after making two or three wide circuits to avoid the currents and eddies, landed all the Italians on the other shore, from whence we viewed the passage of the entire caravan. What an extraordinary picture it was! I can see it before me now, with all the at-

tendant bustle and excitement. One of the boats is sliding along in mid-stream, loaded with the Moors and camels belonging to the baggage-train, and a little farther off the other boat is bringing over the horses and riders of the Fez escort, in whose midst the flag of Mohammed may be seen floating free, and by it the shining dark skin and muslin turban of the Kaïd. Across the river, in the middle of a confused mass of horses, mules, servants and packing-boxes, which covers the bank for some distance, gleams the graceful white figure of Governor Ben-el-Habassi, seated upon a mound, in the shadow of his beautiful black horse with its sky-blue saddle, and surrounded by his officers. On top of the bank, which looks like the wall of a fortification, behind a long row of Arabs, seated on the edge, with their legs hanging over, are the Governor's two hundred horsemen drawn up in line, who, seen thus from below, against the blue background of the sky, look like so many giants. Some naked black servants are plunging in and out of the river, shouting and throwing the water about; a party of Arabs are washing out their rags on the bank in the Moorish fashion, dancing up and down on top of them like marionettes; others swim the river; flocks of storks fly overhead; far off down the bank a column of smoke rises from a group of Bedouin tents; the boatmen chant aloud a prayer to the Prophet for a successful issue to the undertaking; the water sparkles in the sun like gold, and Selam,

standing erect, ten feet in front of us, in his famous caftan, supplies in this great, gay, barbarous picture, the most delightfully harmonious dash of red a painter could possibly desire. The passage consumed several hours. As fast as it landed, each detachment of the caravan got under way; at length the last horses were safely over. Governor Ben-el-Habassi mounted and rejoined his soldiers on the top of the opposite bank. As he was about to start the ambassador and all of us waved our hands in token of salute, upon which the Kariya el-Habassi guard responded with a tremendous discharge of musketry and disappeared from view, but for several moments longer we could distinguish through the smoke the graceful white figure of the Governor, standing erect in his stirrups, with one arm extended towards us in sign of good wishes and farewell. Accompanied then by only the Fez escort, we made our entry into the district of Beni-Hassan, of melancholy fame.

BENI-HASSAN.

BENI-HASSAN.

We travelled for more than an hour through fields of very high barley, above which projected here and there a black tent, a camel's head or a column of smoke; snakes, scorpions and lizards ran across our path. In that brief space of time the sun had already scorched our saddles so that we could hardly touch them with our hands. The glare blinded us, and the dust had choked everyone into silence. That plain stretching away ahead of us like an ocean gave me a sort of fright, as though the caravan might be condemned to travel across it forever. But curiosity to see those haughty Beni-Hassans of whom I had heard so much, at close quarters, revived my spirits. "What sort of people are they?" I asked one of the interpreters.

"Thieves and cut-throats," was the reply. "Beings from the other world, the hardest characters in Morocco."

Upon which I scanned the horizon more anxiously than ever. The "beings from the other world" did not, however, keep us waiting long. Far away ahead of us we presently descried a cloud of dust and a very

few minutes later were surrounded by a crowd of three hundred mounted savages—green, yellow, scarlet, white, purple, ragged, disordered, panting, looking as though they might be fresh from some scene of riot. Through the thick clouds of dust that enveloped us we saw the Governor—a long-haired, black-bearded giant followed by two gray-headed Vice-Governors, all three armed with guns—approach the ambassador, shake hands with him and withdraw. Straightway the charges, firing and shouts of the escort began. They were like so many maniacs. They fired between our mules' legs, over our heads, close to our shoulders. Seen at a little distance they must have seemed exactly like a band of assassins in the act of attacking us. There were terrible-looking old men, with long white beards, so wasted as to be nothing but skin and bone, but who seemed good for centuries. There were young men with great shocks of black hair, which waved in the wind like manes; many of them had bare chests, arms and legs; their turbans were masses of red tatters wound around their heads; torn caiks, wornout saddles, harness made of rope, and swords and daggers of outlandish shapes. And then their faces! "It is absurd," said the commander, paraphrasing Don Abbondio. "It is absurd to suppose that such people as these are going to deny themselves the luxury of killing us." Every individual face told a tale of blood, and they looked askance at us in passing, as though they were trying

Peasant Woman and Child.

to conceal their expressions from us. A hundred of them rode behind us, a hundred on our right, and a hundred on our left, scattered over the plain to a great distance. This plan of stationing a guard on either side was something new, but it was not long before the reason was made manifest. The farther we advanced the more frequent became the tents, until we passed through actual villages, surrounded by Indian figs and aloes, and from all these tents poured a stream of Arabs, clad in nothing but tunics. Singly and in groups, on foot, on horseback, on donkeys, two, sometimes three, astride of one animal; women with children on their shoulders; old men leaning on boys, all of them breathless and eager to see us—and it may be not to see only. Little by little we were surrounded by an entire population; then the soldiers of the escort began to disperse them; they dashed here and there, riding full tilt into the largest groups, shouting, striking out, overturning horses and riders, and scattering curses and abuse in every direction. But as fast as the crowd was broken up in one spot it would reassemble in another, and continue to accompany us on a run. Through all the dust and smoke, amid the constant flash and report of firearms, we would catch glimpses of the wide, open country. In the distance tents, horses, camels, herds, groups of aloes, columns of smoke, crowds of people, standing perfectly still and gazing in our direction in attitudes of profound amazement. We had certainly

reached an inhabited district at last! This blessed population of Morocco does exist, then, and is not mythical after all! At the end of an hour of rather rapid travelling we once more found ourselves in a lonely country, and accompanied only by the escort, and barely a mile beyond, on emerging from behind a group of Indian fig-trees, we came unexpectedly upon what was always a most joyful sight—the flag of Italy waving from the centre of our little movable city, the last tents of which were even then being erected. The camp was pitched this time on the banks of the Sebú, which describes a wide curve from the point where we had crossed it in the morning to that which we had now reached. A close chain of sentinels on foot and armed with muskets was drawn all around the tents. Apparently there was no doubt that this district was considered unsafe. Had I had any uncertainty on this head it would have been quickly dispelled by what I was presently told about the inhabitants. The Beni-Hassans are the most turbulent, audacious, quarrelsome and thievish people of the entire Sebú valley. The last proof they gave of this was a sanguinary revolt which broke out in the summer of 1873, when the reigning Sultan ascended the throne. It began with the sack of the Governor's house, from which they carried off everything, even to the women. Stealing, indeed, is their chief profession. Assembling in armed and mounted bands, they make raids across the Sebú and

throughout the adjoining districts, stealing all they can carry or drag away, and killing, as a precautionary measure, all whom they meet. They are well-disciplined; have their chiefs, their laws and their privileges, which are acknowledged to a certain extent even by the Governor, who sometimes makes use of them to regain possession of stolen property. They steal as a means of levying a sort of fine. The injured party, instead of wasting time in useless investigations and complaints, gets back his belongings on the payment of a certain sum agreed upon with the robber chief. As to the boys, it is universally accepted as the most natural thing in the world that a boy should steal everything he can lay his hands upon. If he happens to get a ball in his breast, or have his head broken, so much the worse for him. Of course no one supposes that people *like* being robbed; and, moreover, there is no rose without a thorn, as their fathers ingenuously tell them. An eight-year-old boy brings in very little; one of twelve considerably more, and a youth of sixteen a great deal. Each thief has his own especial line. There is the grain thief, the cattle thief, the horse thief, the merchandise thief, the thief of the *duar** and the thief of the road. This last finds his most profitable victims in the Jews, who are forbidden by law from carrying arms. But the most common depredations

* The name given to Arab encampments.

of all are those committed in the *duar*. In this particular line there are many incomparable artists, not only among the Beni-Hassans, but all through Morocco. They go on these burglarious expeditions on horseback, and the great art consists not so much in the cleverness as in the rapidity of the act. The point is not to escape unseen, but to escape without being caught. They dash up, seize and vanish before the villagers have time to even recognize them. Thefts committed on the wing, flashes of lightning, prestidigitatory games on horseback. But they plunder on foot as well, and here again are masters of the art. Stealing into the *duar* naked, because dogs do not bark at naked men, or cloaked from head to foot in order to slip the more readily out of the hands of anyone who may lay hold on them, or carrying heaps of leaves in their arms so that the horses, mistaking them for bushes, will not take fright. Horses, indeed, are the most highly valued booty of all. The thief flings his arms around the animal's neck, draws his legs up beneath his belly, and off he goes like an arrow. Their audacity is something incredible; there is not a camp, even be it that of a pasha or an ambassador, to which they do not manage to gain access, notwithstanding the most vigilant watchfulness. They crawl, glide, flatten themselves against the ground, covered with grass, straw, leaves; dressed in sheep-skin, disguised as beggars, sick men, idiots, soldiers, saints. They risk their lives

for a chicken, and are willing to go ten miles in the hope of getting a crown. They have actually stolen the money-bags from beneath the very heads of sleeping ambassadors. And so it was not so much to be wondered at that on this night, notwithstanding the cordon of sentinels, they managed to get away with a sheep which the cook had tied for safe-keeping to his own bed. On discovering his loss in the morning he stood motionless before his tent for half an hour, with arms folded upon his breast and gloomy eyes fixed upon the horizon, exclaiming from time to time, "*Ah! Madona santa, che pais! che pais! che pais!*"

I mentioned above the *duars*. It is impossible to talk at any length about Morocco without describing them, and, I am very well able to do this both from what I saw of them for myself and what Signor Morteo, who has been in the country twenty years, told me. Signor Morteo, by way of parenthesis, is a singular type of man. A Genoese by birth, still young, married to a beautiful English woman, the father of two charming children and wealthy enough to live in elegance in any capital in Europe, he prefers to remain in voluntary exile in Mazagan, a little town on the Atlantic coast, about two hundred kilometres from Morocco, surrounded by Arabs and Moors, occupied solely with his family and his business, not setting eyes for months at a time on a European face, and keeping up no connection with the civilized world

beyond subscribing to two illustrated papers. From time to time he goes on a tour through Italy or France; but he tires of it almost as soon as he gets there, and from the boxes of the Scala or the Grand Opera sighs for his little Moorish house, bathed by the ocean waves, his herds of cattle and his *duar*, the ignorant, peaceful life of his adopted African home. In that land where not so very long ago a French consular agent became so tortured by melancholy that he went crazy, and another attempted to bury himself alive in the sand on the sea-shore, he has never had a single attack of spleen. He talks Arabic, eats like the natives, lives among them, studies them, loves them, and takes their part on all occasions. He has contracted a few of their faults and many of their good qualities; in short, there is nothing European left about him but his family, his dress and his Genoese accent. Notwithstanding which, no one could possibly have shown himself more charmingly Italian than did he, from the first day of our journey to the last. Interpreter, intendant, guide, companion, he made himself useful to and beloved by all, and no one ever thought of disagreeing with him save upon one single point—we wanted Morocco to become civilized, while he contended that civilization would only render the people twice as melancholy and four times more unhappy than they already were, and I must confess that if he was wrong I was more than once tempted to agree with him.

The *duar* is usually a settlement of ten, fifteen or twenty families, connected by some bond of relationship, each family having its own tent. These tents stand in two parallel lines, about thirty feet apart, so that a sort of rectangular space is left in the middle, open at both ends. The tents are almost invariably alike; they are made out of a large piece of black or chocolate-colored material, woven from the fibre of dwarf palms or from goats' or camels' hair; this is stretched over upright stakes or thick reeds, connected by a wooden cross-piece, on which the roof rests, their shape still resembling that of the habitations of the Numidians of the time of Jugurtha, which Sallust compares to overturned ships with their keels in the air. During the autumn and winter the covering is drawn down to the ground and held in place by means of cords and pegs, so as to effectually exclude both wind and rain. In summer a wide aperture is left all around, so that the air may circulate freely, and this is protected by a low hedge of rushes and dried brambles. Owing to these precautions the tent of the *duar* is much cooler in summer and better protected through the rainy season than the same class of Moorish dwellings in the cities, since the latter are without either proper ventilation or glazed windows. The maximum height of a tent is about eight feet, the maximum length about ten. Any which may exceed these dimensions belong to wealthy sheiks, and are extremely rare. A partition made of rushes divides the dwelling in two parts, in

one of which the father and mother sleep, and in the other the children and the rest of the family. A few osier mats, a brightly-colored and arabesqued wooden box, containing clothing; a small looking-glass, manufactured in Trieste or Venice; a high tripod, made of canes and covered with a *haïk*, under which the family bathing is done; a couple of stones for grinding wheat; a loom, such as was used in the days of Abraham; a rough tin lantern, a few earthenware jugs, a few goat-skins, a few dishes, a distaff, a saddle, a gun, a big dagger, such is the entire furnishing of one of these dwellings. In one corner a hen gathers in her brood of chickens, a brick oven faces the entrance, and on one side of the tent is a small vegetable garden; beyond are some round holes, faced with stone and cement, in which grain is stored. In almost every large *duar* there is one tent standing a little apart, occupied by the school-master, who receives a salary of a dollar a month, beside a good many provisions. All the boys are sent there to repeat over and over again the same verses from the Koran, and when these are learned by heart, to write them on pieces of wood; but as the majority of the pupils leave school before they have learned to read, in order to assist their parents at their work, they soon forget what little they have learned. Those few who are willing and able to study keep on until they are twenty, and then go to some town to complete their education, eventually becoming *talebs*, which signifies notary or

lawyer, and is the same thing as priest, since with the Mohammedans the civil and religious law is identical. The life of the *duar* is of the simplest description. At daybreak every one gets up, says his prayers, the cows are milked, the butter made and the sour milk that is left, drunk; for drinking-cups they use conch and limpet-shells, which they purchase from the people living on the coast. Then the men go to their work in the fields, not returning until towards nightfall. The women meantime carry wood and water, grind flour, spin the coarse fabrics in which they and their husbands are clothed, twist rope for their tents from the fibre of the dwarf palm; send their husbands' mid-day food to them and prepare the Kuskussú for the evening. The Kuskussú is mixed with beans, gourds, onions and other vegetables; sometimes it is sweetened, spiced and dressed with a meat sauce, and on feast days meat is served with it. On the return of the men, supper is eaten, and at sunset everyone goes to bed; but sometimes one of the old men will tell a story after supper, seated in the middle of the family circle. Throughout the night the *duar* is plunged in profound silence and darkness; only a few families will occasionally leave lanterns burning before their tents to guide any wayfarer who may have missed his path. The dress of both men and women consists of a cotton tunic, fastened about the waist; a cloak and a very coarse *haïk*. As the latter is only washed once or twice a

year, on the occasion of some very great solemnity, it is usually the color of the owner's skin, or still darker. More pains are taken, however, in the care of the body, since, until the ablutions commanded by the Koran have been duly performed, no one can say his prayers. Most of the women bathe the entire person every day, retiring for the purpose beneath the *haïk*-covered tripod; but, nevertheless, working and sleeping as they do, they are always dirty to an incredible degree, and this notwithstanding the fact, oh, wonder of wonders! that they use soap. Many of the *duar* Arabs pass their spare time in playing cards, and a favorite amusement among the men is to lie flat on their backs and tell their children stories; but as the latter grow up their parents are apt to become indifferent towards them, a feeling returned by the children on their part. Many a *duar* boy gets to be ten or fourteen years of age without ever having seen a house, and it is amusing to hear the accounts of Moors or Europeans, who have taken them into service in their houses in town, of their bewilderment on first finding themselves in a room; how they feel the walls and stamp on the floor, and with what intense delight they look out of the windows and run down the stairs.

The great events in these roving villages are the weddings. The relatives and friends of the bride conduct her, with much shouting and many discharges of fire-arms, to the *duar* of the groom seated upon the

back of a camel and entirely enveloped in a white or light-blue cloak. She is perfumed, her nails are stained with hennè, her eyebrows blackened with burnt cork, and she is usually fattened up for the occasion with a certain herb called *ebba*, much used by young girls. The groom's *duar*, for its part, invites all the neighboring *duars* to attend the festivity, as many as from one to two hundred men, mounted and armed with guns, often responding to the invitation. The bride dismounts before the house of her future husband, and, seated upon a saddle padded and decked with flowers, witnesses the fête. While the men go through a "powder play" the women and girls form a circle in front of her, and dance to the music of a pipe and drum all around a *haïk* spread on the ground, into which every guest throws a piece of money in passing for the use of the young couple, while a crier announces the amount of the gift in stentorian tones and invokes a blessing on the giver. Towards evening the dancing and firing cease, the guests all seat themselves on the ground, and enormous dishes of Kuskussú, roast chicken, mutton cooked on a spit, sweetmeats and fruit are handed around, the supper lasting until midnight. The next day the bride, dressed all in white, her hood drawn down and a red scarf wrapped around her head so as to cover the mouth, makes a tour among the neighboring *duars* to collect more money, accompanied by her friends and relatives. After this the groom goes

back to his toil in the fields, the bride betakes herself to the millstone, and love flies away.

Dancing also forms a part of the ceremonies when any one dies. The nearest relative of the deceased recounts his virtues, while the others crowd around dancing with mournful gestures and postures, covering themselves with mud, tearing their hair and scratching their faces; then the body is washed, wrapped in a piece of new cloth and borne on a litter to the cemetery, where it is buried, resting on the right side, with the face turned to the east. Such is their manner of life and such are the customs which are, so to speak, patent; but the inner existence, who knows anything of that? Who can disentangle the threads from which the web of *duar* life is woven? Who knows how the first words of love are spoken; what forms food for gossip; in what strange manner, with what strange details, jealousy and envy are born and resisted; what virtues shine; what sacrifices are made; what abominable passions hold sway between those four canvas walls? Who can trace the origin of their astounding superstitions? Who can sort that odd medley of traditions, half-pagan, half-Christian?—the cross marked on the skin, vague beliefs in the existence of satyrs, the prints of whose forked feet they find on the ground; the infant carried in triumph when the grain first begins to shoot; the name of Mary invoked in aid of women during their confinement; those circular dances so suggestive of

the rites of sun-worshippers. One thing only is perfectly clear about them, and that is their poverty. They live on the scanty products of poorly cultivated land, out of which must also be squeezed enough to satisfy the heavy and variable demands of the sheik or chief of the *duar*, a functionary elected by themselves, who is directly under the orders of the Governor of the district. A tenth part of the crops must be paid either in money or in kind to the Governor, and an average of one franc for every beast. A hundred francs a year is demanded for every piece of ground requiring the labor of two oxen, while on all the great annual feasts they are obliged to make the Sultan a present amounting to nearly five francs for every tent. They pay out money or furnish beasts as the Governor may decree, whenever the Sultan, or a pasha, or an embassy, or a troop of soldiers passes through the district. And if with all this any one does manage to save a little money it only exposes him to the extortions and persecutions of the Governor, not veiled nor excused by any shadow of pretext, but conducted with open violence. To be reputed wealthy is a real misfortune, and he who has a little hoard buries it in the ground, spends it secretly and feigns poverty and hunger. No one will accept a rusty coin in payment, although he may know it to be perfectly good, for fear he may be thought to have buried treasure, and so be exposed to persecution. When a rich man dies, his relatives, in order to avert

the plundering of his property by the Governor, make him a present. Presents are made by applicants for justice, to avert oppression, to avoid being reduced to starvation; and when at length famine grips them, and blinded by desperation these unfortunate creatures pull down their tents, seize their guns and raise the cry of revolt—what happens? The Sultan lets loose three thousand furies on horseback, who forthwith sow death throughout the rebellious province. Heads are cut off, herds stolen, women abducted, crops fired, the land reduced to a wilderness of blood and ashes, and the messengers returning to the seat of government announce that the rebellion is crushed. If, on the other hand, it spreads, and in spite of all the Governor's efforts the rebels finally succeed in routing the enemy's forces and remaining masters of the field, what is gained beyond a brief period of liberty at the cost of thousands of lives? They elect another Sultan, bring on a dynastic war between the different districts, and quickly find themselves in the grasp of a despotism still more severe than that from which they broke loose; and so it has been going on for the past ten centuries.

At daybreak on the morning of the 10th the caravan got under way, accompanied by the three hundred horsemen of Beni-Hassen and their Governor, Abd-Allah—servant of God. Throughout the entire morning we continued to travel across the plain be-

tween fields of barley, wheat and maize, broken by wide patches of wild fennel and flowers, and dotted over with groups of trees and black tents, which looked like the great heaps of coal one sees here and there on the Tuscan downs. We saw many more herds, horses, camels and parties of Arabs than on any previous day. Far ahead of us we could descry a chain of pale-gray mountains on the horizon, and in the middle distance, between them and the caravan, two *kubbas*, the first illuminated by the sun's rays, the other barely visible. They were the *kubbas* of Sidi-Gueddar and Sidi-Hassem respectively, and between them runs the boundary-line of the Beni-Hassan district; the camp was to be pitched close by the most distant of the two. Long, however, before we had reached this spot Governor Sidi-Abd-Allah, who from the moment of setting out had appeared thoughtful and ill at ease, approached the ambassador and made signs that he wished to speak to him. Mohammed Ducali conducted the interview. "Will the Italian ambassador pardon me," said the haughty Governor, "if I should be so bold as to ask his permission to turn back with my escort?"

The ambassador asked why he wished to do so. "Because," replied Sidi-Abd-Allah, knitting his fierce black eyebrows, "my house is in danger." Nothing less! What a charming task it must be to govern the Beni-Hassans!

The ambassador consenting, Sidi-Abd-Allah took

his hand and pressed it to his breast with an expression of the liveliest gratitude; then wheeling round, the entire varicolored, ragged, horrible throng spurred off at full speed, and in a few moments were no more than a cloud of dust on the horizon.

SIDI-HASSEM.

SIDI-HASSEM.

The district into which we were about to enter is a sort of colony divided into farms among the families of a large number of soldiers, in each of which military duty is imposed upon every male child, and every boy born, so to speak, a soldier, renders such service as he is able from childhood, receiving a fixed stipend even before he can carry a gun. These military families are, moreover, exempt from taxation, and their estates are inalienable so long as the male succession continues. Thus they constitute a regular military organization, disciplined and faithful, by whose aid the Governor can tranquilly "devour," as the local phraseology has it, a rebel province without fear of the sword he wields being turned against himself. It might be termed a corps of military tax-collectors, which brings much more in to the Governor than it costs him to keep, since in Morocco the army is particularly useful to the department of finance, and the principal tool used by the administrative machine is the sword.

Hardly had we crossed the border of Beni-Hassan when we saw a crowd of horsemen in the distance

coming towards us at a gallop, preceded by a green flag. An unusual circumstance was their being ranged in two long lines, one behind the other, with the officers in front. When they were about twenty feet distant from us they halted suddenly and simultaneously, and their commander, a stout old man with a white beard, amiable expression and an extremely high turban, held his hand out to the ambassador, saying: "You are welcome! You are welcome!" and then to us, "Welcome, welcome, welcome."

We then proceeded on our way. These new cavaliers were very different from those of Beni-Hassan; they had cleaner clothes and brighter arms, almost all their yellow slippers were embroidered in red, their swords had rhinoceros-horn handles, and they wore light-blue cloaks, white caftans and green belts. Many of them were quite advanced in years, but it was that hardy form of old age which seems likely to be indefinitely prolonged; others, again, were very young. I recollect one couple in particular who could not have been more than ten years old, handsome and full of life. They looked at us smilingly, seeming to say, "Well, now, you have not such hangmen's faces, after all, as we were led to expect." There was one old negro of such gigantic stature that had he stretched his feet down out of the stirrups he would almost have stood on the ground. One of the officers wore stockings! In about a half an hour we met another troop, carrying a red flag and commanded by

A Soldier of the Sultan.

another old Kaïd, who fell in with the first, and later on still another, and so on, sometimes only a half dozen men in the party, sometimes many more, each carrying its flag and on its way to swell the ranks of the escort. When the number was finally complete the usual exercises began. It was easy to see that these were regulars; they went through their manœuvres with far more precision than any whom we had yet seen. One of these was new to us—one soldier dashed ahead with loosened bridle-rein; another followed close after him also on a full run; all at once the leader rose in his stirrups, and turning entirely around, fired his musket into the other's breast, the latter, at the same instant, firing into his side, so that had the guns been loaded they must have dropped dead simultaneously. Once a horse fell when going at full speed, precipitating his rider over his head to such a distance that we thought he surely must be killed, instead of which he leaped to his feet and regained his saddle in a twinkling, returning to the charge more furiously than ever. Each one shouted his own peculiar cry. "Look out! Look out!" "You are all witnesses!" "It is I!" "Here comes death!" "Wretched me!" (one who had missed his aim). "Make room for the barber!" (it was the soldiers' barber), and one had the curious cry, "To my painted one!" which made all his companions laugh. The interpreter explained that what he meant was, "to my sweetheart, who is as beautiful as a painting,"

an odd thing for people who not only have the greatest aversion to any representation of the human form, but actually have no very clear idea of what a painting is like. The two boys charged together, shouting, "Make way for the brothers!" and then fired into the ground, with heads bent so low as nearly to touch their saddles. In this manner we approached the *kubba* of Sidi-Hassem, where the camp was to be pitched.

Poor Hamed Ben-Kasen Buhamei! Until now I have only alluded to you in passing, but as I think of how I saw you that morning helping the servants to drive in the stakes of the ambassador's tent I feel that I must give some expression to my admiration for and gratitude towards you. What a kindly general he was! From the day we set out he had never yet had one of the soldiers or servants whipped; never for an instant displayed the slightest ill-humor; had always been the first out of his tent in the morning, and the last to go to bed at night; had never let it appear to even the most observing eye that his salary of forty francs a month struck him as being a little low; he had not the least shadow of self-importance; he would help us to mount, examine our saddles to see that they were firm; give our stubborn mules a blow in passing; was always at hand for everyone and everything; threw himself down beside our tents like any humble mule driver; smiled back whenever he saw us smile; offered us Kuskussú; leaped to his feet at the ambassador's slightest motion,

like a puppet on springs; said his prayers five times a day like a good Mussulman; counted the eggs of the *mona;* oversaw the slaughter of the sheep; looked at the artists' sketch-books without giving a sign that he was scandalized; and was, in short, as I should suppose, the man the most *ad hoc* for this particular mission whom his majesty, the Sultan, could possibly have selected from among the entire ranks of his bare-foot generals. Hamed-Ben Kasen frequently recalled with pride the fact that his father had been a general in the war with Spain, and he sometimes spoke of his own sons, who were with their mother at Mequinez, her native city.

"It is three months," he said one day, with a sigh, "since I last saw them."

Perhaps what he really meant was "since I last saw her," but he said "them" from modesty.

After having witnessed the presentation of the *mona*—including on that occasion a prodigious dish of Kuskussú, which five Arabs could barely carry—we took refuge as usual in our tents to wait until the daily 104° in the shade should be over. The thermometer stayed at that point until four o'clock in the afternoon, and during that time the camp was plunged in absolute silence; at four it came to life again. The artists took up their brushes; the doctor interviewed his patients; one would go off to take a bath; another to shoot at a mark; another to pay a call in one of the other tents; another to watch the exer-

science in our ten heads than is to be found in the entire Empire of the Sherifs, but astride of these mules, dressed in these garments and these colors and these hats, great heavens! what figures we cut beside them!" Ah, how true it was! The very least of those tattered riders was more graceful, more stately, more calculated to excite a woman's admiration than all the dandies of Europe put together. Another curious little scene took place that evening at table. The two oldest Kaïds in the escort came to see the ambassador, and sat down beside him. On being asked if they had ever heard of Italy they both replied in the same breath, and with violent gesticulations, "Never! Never!" as though eager to deny some charge that had been preferred against them. Then the ambassador, with the patience of a schoolmaster, gave them some geographical and political points concerning our mysterious country, to which they listened wide-eyed and open-mouthed, like two children.

"And what is the population of your country?" asked one.

"Twenty-five millions," replied the ambassador.

They made a gesture of amazement.

"And Morocco," said the other, "how many millions has it?"

"Four," answered the ambassador, to sound them.

"Only four!" they exclaimed ingenuously, gazing at one another.

Those two worthy generals knew no more about Morocco than they did about Italy, and no more possibly about their own district than the rest of Morocco. Before going they said something still more amusing. Signor Morteo showed them a photograph of his wife, saying:

"Allow me to present my wife."

They looked at it again and again with the greatest interest, and then said:

"And the others?"

Either they did not know, or, as is more likely, had forgotten, that Christians are unlucky enough to be allowed only one apiece.

Sleep that night was out of the question. The cocks crowed, the dogs barked, the sheep bleated, the horses neighed, the sentinels sang, the water-sellers rang their bells, the soldiers quarreled over the redistribution of the *mona*, the servants tripped continually over the tent-ropes, the camp seemed to be an open market. But there remained only four more days of travel, and we had a magic word that consoled us for everything—"Fez!"

ZEGGOTA.

ZEGGOTA.

We made an early start for Zeggota, inspirited by the thought that on that day we should behold the mountains of Fez in the distance. There was an autumnal freshness in the air, and a light mist obscured the surrounding country. A crowd of Arabs wrapped in their cloaks formed two wings at the entrance to the camp. The soldiers of the escort were huddled together in a close chilly group behind us, and the children of the neighboring *duars* gazed out with sleepy eyes from behind the tents and hedges. Ere long, however, all this changed, the sun came out, spectators crowded around us, the horsemen scattered in all directions, the air resounded with shouts and the rapid reports of fire-arms, and everything became suddenly bright, animated, full of life and color, while the autumnal cold was succeeded, as is always the case in that climate, by the burning heat of summer. Among my notes of that morning I find one which says laconically: "Grasshoppers, sample of Selam's eloquence." I remember, in fact, to have noticed a field some distance off that seemed to be in motion, an effect produced by an enormous number

of green grasshoppers coming towards us in leaps. Selam, who happened to be riding beside me just then, gave me an admirably picturesque description of the incursions of those terrible insects, which I remember word for word; but how can I possibly render the effect of his gestures, his expression and the tones of his voice, which really told more than the words themselves. "It is frightful, signor; they come from over there," pointing to the south, "like a black cloud; the noise is heard from afar. They come, they come, and at their head their Sultan, the Sultan Jeraad, who leads them on; they cover the roads, the fields, houses, *duars*, forests. The cloud grows larger and larger, on, on, on, gnawing and consuming; over rivers, over ditches, over walls, through fire; the grass is destroyed, the flowers, the leaves, the fruit, the grain, the bark of the trees; on and on, no one can stop them, not flaming tribes, not the Sultan with his army, not all the people of Morocco assembled together. Heaps of dead grasshoppers. Forward go the living. Do ten die? A hundred are born. Do a hundred die? A thousand are born. Such sights at Tangier! streets covered, gardens covered, sea-shore covered, sea covered, everything green, everything in motion; living, dead, decayed, offensive; a plague, a pestilence, a curse from God!" And this is really so. The fetid odor arising from myriads of dead grasshoppers sometimes produces a contagious form of fever; and, to cite one instance,

the terrible plague which in 1799 fairly depopulated both the towns and country of Bombay broke out just after one of their visitations. When the advance guard of the invading army appears the Arabs go forward to meet it, in parties of four or five hundred, with sticks, clubs and firebrands, but only succeed in forcing the enemy to deviate somewhat from its course; and it occasionally happens that when one tribe drives them back thus from their own into the district of a neighboring tribe, the grasshopper war is converted into a civil war. The only thing that frees the country from this curse is a favorable wind; this blows them into the sea, where they drown and are swept up on the beach for days afterwards in great heaps. When the favorable wind still delays, the only possible consolation left the inhabitants is to eat their enemies; this they do before they have laid their eggs, boiling them and adding a seasoning of salt, pepper and vinegar. They taste a little like sea-crabs, and as many as four hundred can be eaten in a single day.

About two miles from camp we overtook that part of the caravan which was bearing Victor Emmanuel's presents to Fez. White camels were harnessed together, two by two, in tandem fashion, by long poles attached to either side of the saddle, from which swung the cases; they were in charge of some Arabs on foot and some mounted soldiers, and at their head was a wagon drawn by two oxen, the only wagon we

had seen in Morocco! It had been especially made at El Araish upon the model, I should say, of the first vehicle that ever appeared upon the earth's surface; squat, heavy, ill-formed, with wheels composed of solid blocks of wood, and the most curious and absurd-looking harness that could possibly be imagined. But to the inhabitants of the *duars*, most of whom had in all probability never seen a wheeled vehicle before, it was a marvel. They ran to behold it from all directions, pointed it out to each other, followed behind and walked in front of it with visible excitement. Even our mules, unaccustomed to the sight of such objects, showed great reluctance to pass it, some planting themselves stubbornly on their fore feet and others wheeling completely around. Selam himself regarded it with a certain complacency, as though saying, "That was made in our country;" and this was excusable, seeing that in all Morocco there are very likely no more wagons than pianos, which, if the estimate of a French consul is correct, would reduce the number to about a dozen. There seems, indeed, to be a certain antipathy to vehicles of every kind. The Tangier authorities, for example, forbade Prince Frederick, of Hesse-Darmstadt, when he was there in 1839, to ride out in a carriage. The Prince wrote to the Sultan offering to have the principal streets paved at his own expense, provided the permission refused by the authorities were granted him. "I will grant it most willingly," replied the Sultan,

"but upon one condition—that the carriage shall have no wheels, since as Protector of the Faithful I cannot permit my subjects to be exposed to the risk of being run over by a Christian." Whereupon the Prince, to turn the whole thing into ridicule, took him at his word, and there are people in Tangier now who remember seeing him going about the town in a carriage without wheels, suspended between two mules!

At last we reached that blessed hill for which for three days past the caravan had been looking with such longing impatience. After making a tedious ascent we passed through a narrow gorge called in Arabic Ben Tinca, which we were obliged to take single file, and came out above a charming valley, flowery and solitary, into which the caravan descended in festive style, filling the air with shouts and bursts of song. At the foot of the valley we came upon another body of soldiers belonging to the military colonies, come to relieve the first. There were a hundred of them, very old and very young, dark, long-haired, some of them mounted on enormous horses with housings of unusual splendor. Their Kaïd, Abou-ben-Gileli, was a sturdy old man of severe aspect and curt manner, of whom, and of his soldiers, one might have said as Don Abbondio did of the anonymous leader and the assassins: "I can well understand that to control such faces as these nothing less is needed than such a face as that." Without so much as a glance at the

fields of ripening wheat and barley that lined the road on either side, the soldiers urged their horses forward, and scattering in all directions on a full gallop, began the powder play, five and ten firing at a time into the air, wheeling to left and right, turning about in their saddles in every conceivable manner, and yelling all the while like demons. One of them whirled his gun around with such rapidity that it could hardly be seen; another, as he flew by, shouted in a tremendous voice, "Here comes the thunderbolt!" a third, whose horse had swerved a little, came within a hair's-breadth of landing in our midst and throwing us all to the ground with our heels in the air. At a certain point the ambassador and captain, accompanied by Hamed-ben-Kasen and a few soldiers, separated from the rest of the caravan and went off to make the ascent of a mountain a few miles away, while we continued our route. A few minutes later an incident occurred which I am not likely ever to forget.

A half-naked Arab boy, about sixteen or eighteen years old, came towards us, driving two recalcitrant oxen, by the aid of a heavy stick. The Kaïd, Abou-ben-Gileli, stopped his horse and called him. We learned afterwards that the oxen were to have been attached to the wagon which we had passed not long before, and that they were several hours behind time. The unfortunate boy approached trembling, and stood before the Kaïd, who put some question

to him I did not understand. The lad stammered a reply, and went white as death.

"Fifty lashes," said the Kaïd curtly, turning to his men.

Three powerful fellows at once leaped from their horses, and the poor wretch without waiting for them to lay hold of him, without uttering a single word, or so much as raising his eyes to the countenance of his judge, threw himself flat on his face, as the custom is, with arms and legs extended. All of this had transpired in an instant; but the stick had not been lifted in the air before the commander and some of the others, dashing into the midst of the group, had made the Kaïd understand that they could not think of permitting such a brutal punishment to be inflicted. Abou-ben-Gileli inclined his head, and the boy arose, pale, with convulsed features, gazing alternately at his deliverers and the Kaïd with an expression of mingled fear and astonishment.

"Go," said the interpreter, "you are free."

"Ah!" he cried with an intonation that cannot be conveyed, and quick as lightning, disappeared.

We proceeded on our way, but I must say that, although I have seen a man killed, I have never experienced such feelings of profound horror as when I beheld that half-naked boy stretched out on the ground to receive his fifty lashes; and after the horror of the thing my blood began to boil, and I denounced the Kaïd, the Sultan, Morocco and its in-

humanity in the most violent terms. It is, however, undoubtedly better to wait for second thoughts. "But how about ourselves?" I presently reflected. "How many years is it since we abolished whipping? And how many since it was abolished in Austria? and in Prussia? and throughout the rest of Europe?" These thoughts had the effect of somewhat curbing my righteous indignation, and I was left with only a strong feeling of bitterness. If anyone cares to know how whipping is conducted in Morocco, suffice it to say that when the operation is completed it sometimes happens that the victim is carried to the cemetery.

During the remainder of the ride to Zeggota the caravan passed over a succession of hills and valleys, the road running between fields of wheat and barley and bright green pasture, bordered with aloes, Indian figs, wild olives, dwarf oaks, ivy, strawberry-trees, myrtles and flowering shrubs. Not a tent was in sight, not a living soul to be seen. The country was as luxuriant, silent and deserted as an enchanted garden. Once on reaching the top of a certain hill we descried the blue summits of the Fez Mountains, which, however, immediately disappeared again as though they had merely raised their heads a moment to see us pass. In the hottest part of the day we arrived at Zeggota. This was one of the most exquisite spots we saw throughout the entire trip. The camp was pitched on the mountain-side, in a great

rocky cavity, shaped like an amphitheatre, and worn by the successive passage back and forth of man and beast into innumerable paths, one above the other, whose more or less regular lines had the effect of graduated seats, and as a matter of fact these tiers were at that very moment crowded with Arabs, who sat on the ground in semicircles, like spectators in some actual amphitheatre. Below us lay a wide, basin-shaped plain, whose cultivated fields made it look like a huge checker-board, with squares of green, yellow, white, red and purple silk and velvet. Looking through field-glasses we could see on the more distant hills here a row of tents, there a *kubba* half-hidden among the aloes; in one place a camel, beyond it an Arab lying on the ground, a herd of cattle, a group of women; sluggish, infrequent signs of life, that made one feel more forcibly than their entire absence would have done the profound peacefulness of the scene. Above all this loveliness a white, blazing, blinding sky, forcing one to bow his head and half-close his eyes.

But it is not so much the beauties of nature that make Zeggota an undying memory with me as a certain experiment I made there with *kiff*.

Kiff, let me say for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with it, is the leaf of a sort of hemp called *hashish*, celebrated throughout the East for its narcotic qualities. It is much used in Morocco, and it may generally be taken for granted that those Arabs

and Moors, so frequently to be seen in the towns, gazing at the passers-by with dull, unseeing eyes, or dragging themselves along like persons stunned by a blow on the head, are victims of this pernicious plant. Most people smoke the *kiff*, mixed with a little tobacco, in tiny clay pipes, or it may be eaten in a form of confectionery, called *madjun*, made of butter, honey, nuts, musk and cloves. The effects are very peculiar. Doctor Miguerez, who had tried it, had often told me of his experiences, recounting, among other things, how he was seized with an irresistible desire to laugh, and how he seemed to be lifted off the ground, so that in passing through a doorway, about twice his own height, he had bent his head for fear of striking it against the lintel. All of this so aroused my curiosity that I several times begged him to give me a little piece of *madjun*, just enough to make me see and feel some of these curious things without absolutely losing control of myself. The worthy doctor at first excused himself, saying that it would be better to make the experiment at Fez, where we would be more conveniently situated, but on my persisting he at length, a little unwillingly, handed me at Zeggota a plate on which lay the much-desired sweetmeat We were seated at table: if I mistake not, both Ussi and Biseo took a little at the same time, but of its effect on them I have no recollection. The *madjun* was like a bit of paste, violet-colored and smelling like pomatum. For about half an hour, from

the soup, that is, to the fruit, I felt nothing at all, and began to chaff the doctor about his fears, but he only smiled and said, "Wait, wait." And sure enough, as the fruit was put on the table the first symptoms of intoxication did begin to manifest themselves. At first they took the form of great hilarity and rapid talking; then I began to laugh heartily at everything I or any one else said; every word that was uttered seemed to me the most exquisite witticism. I laughed at the servants, at the looks of my companions, at my chair as it tilted over, at the designs on the china, at the shapes of certain bottles, at the color of the cheese I was eating, until all at once, becoming conscious that I no longer had command of myself, I endeavored to think of something serious in order to regain my self-control. Remembering the boy who was to have been whipped that morning, I felt the greatest interest in him. I would have liked to take him back with me to Italy, to have him educated, to give him a career. I loved him like a son. And the Kaïd, Abou-ben-Gileli, poor old man. Kaïd-Abou-ben-Gileli? Why, I loved him too, like a father. And the soldiers of the escort! They were all good fellows, ready to defend us, to risk their lives in our behalf. I loved them like brothers. And then the Algerians! I loved them as well. "Why not?" I thought. They are of the same race as the Moroccoans, and after all, what race is that? Are we not all brothers, made after one pattern? We should love one another. I

love people, and I am happy, and I threw one arm around the doctor's neck, whereupon he burst out laughing. From this cheerful mood I fell all at once into a state of profound melancholy. All the people whom I had ever offended rose up before me. I recalled every pang I had caused those who loved me; was oppressed by feelings of remorse and unavailing regret; voices seemed to whisper in my ear in accents of affectionate reproach. I repented, begged for pardon; furtively brushed away the great tear which I felt trembling in the corner of one eye. Then a succession of strange disconnected memories began to course wildly through my brain; long-forgotten friends of my childhood; certain words of a dialect I had not spoken for twenty years; women's faces; my old regiment; William the Silent; Paris; the editor Barbera; a beaver hat that I had worn as a child; the Acropolis at Athens; my bill at an inn in Seville; a thousand queer fancies. I have a vague recollection of seeing the company look at me smilingly. From time to time I would close my eyes and reopen them without knowing whether I had been asleep or no, whether minutes or hours had elapsed in the interval. Then a clear idea came into my head at last, and I began to speak.

"Once," I said, "I went to . . . ." Where was it I went? Who went? It had all escaped me. Thoughts sparkled for an instant and expired like fire-flies—crowded, mixed, confused. At one moment

I saw Ussi with his head elongated, like the reflection in a bad mirror; the vice-consul with a face two feet wide; and the others tapered off, swelled out, contorted, like extravagant caricatures, making grimaces at me that were inexpressibly comic; and I laughed and wagged my head, and dozed, and thought that they were all crazy; that we were in another world; that nothing I saw was real; that I was not very well; that I did not know where I was; that it was getting strangely dark and silent—. When I came to myself I was lying on my own bed in our tent, with the doctor seated beside me, holding a lighted candle and regarding me attentively.

"There," said he smiling, "it is over, but this must be the first and last time."

FROM ZEGGOTA TO TGH'AT.

FROM ZEGGOTA TO TGH'AT.

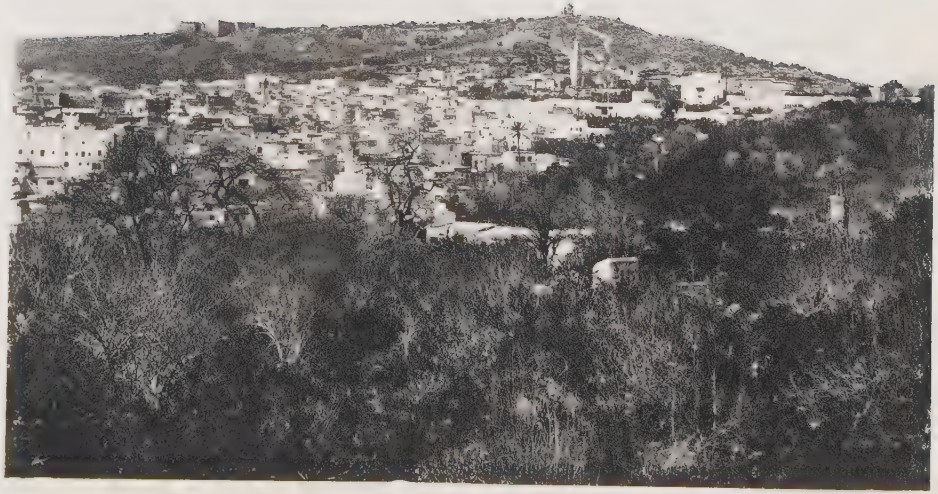
While I am running hither and thither looking for my mule, which I find at last I really do not know how, squeezed in among the baggage, the embassy has gotten under way. I would still be able to overtake it were it not that just as I reach the entrance to the camping-ground my horse stumbles in descending the rocky incline, the saddle slips and the writer falls; it is a good half-hour before I can get everything properly adjusted once more, and meanwhile, farewell embassy. It is evidently written that I am to continue the journey alone, followed only by a lagging servant, who, when I am attacked, will come to the rescue just in time to see me draw my last breath. The will of Allah be done! The country is deserted, the sky cloudy; every half-hour or so I can see upon the summit of some distant hill a long, variegated procession, in whose midst I recognize the ambassador's white horse and Selam's red caftan, and for a few minutes do not feel so utterly alone; but the cavalcade disappears and the silence and solitude once more fall upon me like a pall. At about an hour's distance from the camp I meet a returning body of

horsemen, some dozen or so, under the leadership of the redoubtable Abou-ben-Gileli, the old Kaïd of the fifty lashes, who throws a sinister glance at my back in passing. I smile deprecatingly and hurry by on the other side. Issuing from the beautiful valley, overlooked by our camp of the night before, I enter another one, very large, shut in by precipitous hills, clothed with aloes and olives, forming, as it were, great green walls on the right and left of a wide, straight road, closed at the lower end by a curtain of blue mountains. Presently I meet some Arabs, who stop to watch me pass, and gaze all about in amazement at my being unescorted. Will they attack me, or will they not? One of them turns, and tearing off a stout branch from a neighboring tree, runs towards me. It has come, then! and I stop my beast and grasp my pistol. The man begins to laugh, and holds the stick out, explaining that it is intended to aid me in my efforts to get the mule forward. Just then two of the soldiers belonging to the escort appear, coming towards me on a gallop. It seems that after all, my hour has not come. The soldiers place themselves on either side of me and fall to prodding my beast with the barrels of their guns, at the same time crying, "*Embasciador, Embasciador.*" The ambassador has sent them back to see what has become of me. They deserve some reward, so I stop and offer them a bottle of wine I happen to carry in my pocket. They do not say either yes or no, but re-

On the way to Market.

gard one another smilingly, giving me to understand by signs that they have never tasted any. "Try it," I say, with an accompanying gesture. One of them takes the bottle, pours a little into the palm of his hand, licks it up and remains thoughtful for a moment, while the other does the same. Then they look at each other, laugh and make a motion of assent. "Well, drink it, then," and they do, one emptying half the bottle at a gulp and the other finishing it; each then places a hand on his breast and gazes heavenward, with an expression of intense approbation. We resume our journey, now and then meeting parties of men, women and children, all of whom regard me with the same look of amazement; finally one asks a question, receiving a quick negative sign from the soldiers, and I am able to make out that they suppose me to be under arrest; the man had said, "There goes a Christian who has robbed the ambassador." Some villages of white houses crown the summits of the hills flanking the valley. The *kubbas* become more frequent, as well as the palm and fruit-trees, and the flowering oleanders and roses. The whole country is a vivid green, and here and there we begin to notice indications that the land is divided into separate estates. At last we enter a gloomy defile, winding between two high walls of rock, on coming out of which we find ourselves at the camp. We have reached the banks of the Mikkés, an affluent of the Sebú; near by is a small

bridge of masonry, built sixteen years ago, in a basin formed by a circle of rocky hills. The sky is as gray as a leaden roof, beneath it everything looks dull and ashy. The thermometer marks 104°, and for seven hours no one stirs out of his tent, while the only sounds to break through the close oppressive atmosphere are the singing of the crickets and the twang of Ducali's guitar; a profound sense of dullness weighs every one down, but towards evening all this is changed. A light shower freshens up the air; some brilliant sunbeams shine through the opening of the gorge like an electric current, gilding half the camp; couriers arrive from Fez, and others from Tangier; curious villagers approach; two-thirds of the caravan plunge into the river; and dinner is furthermore enlivened by the arrival of a new personage, come from the great city of the Sherifs—a Moor named Shellal, still another protégé of the Italian legation, who has a lawsuit pending with the Sultan's Government the most voluminous turban, the roundest face, the blessedest, greasiest type of a Moor we have encountered since leaving Tangier. The next morning we are off at daybreak, escorted only by the forty soldiers under Hamed Ben Kasen; a revolt has broken out in the provinces bordering on Algeria, and all the cavalry of the district of Fez has been dispatched against the rebels. "We shall see a great many heads on the gates of Fez," observed Ducali. For two hours we journeyed on among the hills, through



Panorama of Fez.

broom and lentisks; then we came out on the vast plain of Fez, encircled by hills and mountains, yellow with grain, sprinkled over with large *duars*, traversed by the *Blue Fountain river*—which flows into the Mikkés, and by the *River of Pearls*, a tributary of the Sebú, which runs through the sacred city of the Empire; overflown by crowds of cranes, wild-geese, turtle-doves, partridges and herons; luxuriant in its vegetation, bathed in light, peaceful and smiling as an enormous garden. We pitched our tents on the bank of the *Blue Fountain river*, and the hours flew by enlivened by hunting, visits to the *duars*, the accounts brought to us by Fez Jews of the grand preparations the army were making, emissaries from court bringing us the Sultan's greeting, Arab families fording the river single-file, first the camel, then the men, then the women, carrying the children on their backs, then the boys, then the dogs swimming, caravans going by, crowds of sight-seers collected around the camp, an enchanting sunset, and the most brilliant night ever beheld by the eye of mortal man.

En route again by daybreak, once more the road takes us among the hills, then winds down into the plain beneath, where it runs between two steep banks which effectually shut out the view. All at once a resounding voice is heard, "There is Fez!" Every one stops short. Directly in front of us, several miles away, and just at the foot of the mountains, we

can see a great forest of towers, minarets and palm-trees, slightly veiled in mist. A joyful "We have arrived!" breaks forth simultaneously from every mouth, in Italian, Spanish, French, Arabic, Genoese, Sicilian, Neapolitan, and to the first wondering silence a buzz of conversation succeeds. Starting off once more, we proceed to our last camping-ground, at the foot of Mount Tgh'at, on the banks of the River of Pearls, an hour and a half from Fez. Here throughout the entire day there is a bustle, a coming and going, that make it seem like the headquarters of an army in action. Messengers arrive from the Sultan, from the chief minister, from the head-master of ceremonies, from the Governor of Fez; officers, major-domos, merchants, relatives of the Moors in the caravan, all well-dressed, spruce, ceremonious, bringing with them an aroma of the court and metropolis, and conversing in measured tones and with stately gestures of the great army, the enormous crowds, the enchanting palace awaiting us. Eight o'clock of the following morning is the hour appointed for our entrance into the city. By daybreak every one is afoot, there is a great stir among the razors, clothes-brushes, combs and curry-combs, and a delightful excitement that more than atones for all the fatigues of the journey. The ambassador dons his gold-laced hat, Hamed Ben Kasen his dress sword, Selam a pink caftan, Civo a green handkerchief, which he winds about his head—a sure indication of the approach of

some very great solemnity; all the servants put on white cloaks, all the soldiers of the escort bring out their shiniest weapons, all the Italians draw forth the most elegant clothing their trunks contain. We number about a hundred, all counted, and it is safe to say that Italy has never been represented by an embassy more oddly made up, more gayly colored, more joyously expectant, or more impatiently awaited, than this one. The weather is superb, the horses stamp, the *haïks* wave in the morning breeze, every face beams, and every eye is fixed upon the ambassador, who counts the minutes on his watch. Eight o'clock! At a sign we all leap to our saddles, and at last are off.

Ah, what a thing it is to stay a child always! I can feel my heart thump.